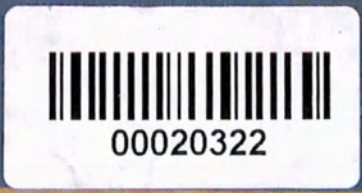
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# BIOGRAPHIA LITERARIA

## OR BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

## OF MY LITERARY LIFE AND OPINIONS

BY SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

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# BIOGRAPHIA LITERARIA.

## CHAPTER I.

*Occasion of the Lyrical Ballads, and the objects originally proposed—Preface to the second edition —The ensuing controversy, its causes and acrimony—Philosophic definitions of a Poem and Poetry with scholia.*

DURING the first year that Mr. Wordsworth and I were neighbours,[1] our conversations turned frequently on the two cardinal points of poetry, the power of exciting the sympathy of the reader by a faithful adherence to the truth of nature, and the power of giving the interest of novelty by the modifying colours of imagination. The sudden charm, which accidents of light and shade, which moon-light or sunset diffused over a known and familiar landscape, appeared to represent the practicability of combining both. These are the poetry of nature. The thought suggested itself—(to which of us I do not recollect)—

[1] In 1797-8, whilst Mr. Coleridge resided at Nether Stowey, and Mr. Wordsworth at Alfoxton. Ed.]

that a series of poems might be composed of two sorts. In the one, the incidents and agents were to be, in part at least, supernatural; and the excellence aimed at was to consist in the interesting of the affections by the dramatic truth of such emotions, as would naturally accompany such situations, supposing them real. And real in this sense they have been to every human being who, from whatever source of delusion, has at any time believed himself under supernatural agency. For the second class, subjects were to be chosen from ordinary life; the characters and incidents were to be such as will be found in every village and its vicinity, where there is a meditative and feeling mind to seek after them, or to notice them, when they present themselves.

In this idea originated the plan of the LYRICAL BALLADS; in which it was agreed, that my endeavours should be directed to persons and characters supernatural, or at least romantic; yet so as to transfer from our inward nature a human interest and a semblance of truth sufficient to procure for these shadows of imagination that willing suspension of disbelief for the moment, which constitutes poetic faith. Mr. Wordsworth, on the other hand, was to propose to himself as his object, to give the charm of novelty to things of every day, and to excite a feeling analogous to the supernatural, by awakening the mind's attention to the lethargy of custom, and directing it to the loveliness and the wonders of the world before us; an inexhaustible treasure, but for which, in consequence of the film of familiarity and selfish solicitude we have eyes, yet see not, ears that hear not, and hearts that neither feel nor understand.

With this view I wrote THE ANCIENT MARINER, and was preparing among other poems, THE DARK,

LADIE, and the CHRISTABEL,[2] in which I should have more nearly realized my ideal, than I had done in my first attempt. But Mr. Wordsworth's industry had proved so much more successful, and the number of his poems so much greater, that my compositions, instead of forming a balance, appeared rather an interpolation of heterogeneous matter. Mr. Wordsworth added two or three poems written in his own character, in the impassioned, lofty, and sustained diction, which is characteristic of his genius. In this form the LYRICAL BALLADS were published;[3] and were presented by him, as an experiment, whether subjects, which from their nature rejected the usual ornaments and extra-colloquial style of poems in general, might not be so managed in the language of ordinary life as to produce the pleasurable interest, which it is the peculiar business of poetry to impart. To the second edition he added a preface of considerable length;[4] in which, notwithstanding some passages of apparently a contrary import, he was understood to contend for the extension of this style to poetry of all kinds, and to reject as vicious and indefensible all phrases and forms of speech that were not included in what he (unfortunately, I think, adopting an equivocal expression) called the language of real life.[5] From

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[2] The Ancient Mariner, Poet. W. II. p. 1.—Christabel, ibid. p. 28.—The Dark Ladie, P. W. I. p. 150. Ed.]

[3] [The first volume of the Lyrical Ballads was published in 1798. Ed.]

[4] [The second edition, with an additional volume and the preface, was published in 1800. Ed.]

[5] ["The first volume of these Poems has already been submitted to general perusal. It was published as an experiment, which I hoped might be of some use to ascertain how far, by fitting to metrical arrangement a selection of the real language of men in a state of vivid sensation, that sort of pleasure and

this preface, prefixed to poems in which it was impossible to deny the presence of original genius, however mistaken its direction might be deemed, arose the whole long-continued controversy. For from the conjunction of perceived power with supposed heresy I explain the inveteracy and in some instances, I grieve to say, the acrimonious passions, with which the controversy has been conducted by the assailants.[6]

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that quantity of pleasure may be imparted, which a Poet may rationally endeavour to impart." Preface P. W. II. p. 303. Ed.]

[6] [In illustration of these remarks or the allusions that follow the Editor gave rather copious extracts from the E. Review of Oct. 1807, Nov. 1814, and Oct. 1815, which I believe that, after all, he would have felt it not worth while to reprint; and I therefore refer the curious reader to those specimens of the criticism of thirty years since in their own place. I think it right however to preserve the Editor's comment upon them, which is as follows:—

It is of great importance to the history of literature in this country that the critiques contained in the Edinboro' Review on Wordsworth, Southey, and Coleridge, should be known and reperused in the present day;—not as reflecting any special disgrace on the writers,—(for as to them, the matter and tone of these essays only showed that the critics had not risen above the level of the mass of their age)—but for the purpose of demonstrating that immediate popularity, though it may attend, can never be a test of, excellence in works of the imagination; and of teaching, if possible, the duty and the advantages of respect for admitted genius, even when it pursues a path of its own making. Just consider what was the effect of all the scorn and ridicule of Wordsworth by which the Edinboro' Review, the leading critical Journal of the nation for a long time, distinguished itself for twenty years together. A great laugh was created in the fashionable world of letters, and the poet's expectation of pecuniary profit was destroyed. Public opinion was, for about a quarter of a century, set against the reception of works, which were always allowed to be innocent, and are now everywhere

Had Mr. Wordsworth's poems been the silly, the childish things, which they were for a long time de-

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proclaimed as excellent; and for the same space of time a great man was defrauded of that worldly remuneration of his virtuous labours, which the authors of frivolous novels and licentious poems were permitted—and in some instances helped—during the same period to obtain for their compositions. To make the lesson perfect, it has pleased Heaven to let Wordsworth himself live to see that revolution legitimated which he and his compeers, Coleridge and Southey, in different ways and degrees, together wrought; and to read his own defence and praise in the pages of the same work by which some of his most exquisite productions were once pronounced below criticism. Ed.

Agreeing as I do with these remarks in the main, I venture to observe that in my mind they ascribe too much influence upon the early fate of Mr. W.'s poems to the E. Review. That those poems were not generally admired from the first, was, in my opinion, their *own fault*, that is to say, arose principally from their being works of great genius, and consequently, though old as the world itself, in one way, yet in another, a new thing under the sun. Novelty is delightful when it is understood at once, when it is but the old familiar matters newly set forth; but here was a new world presented to the reader which was also a strange world, and most of those who had grown to middle age acquainted with the old world only, and chiefly with that part of it which was least like Wordsworth's,—the hither part, out of sight of Chaucer and Spencer and the old English Poets in general, could never learn their way, or find themselves at home there.

Periodical literature can hardly be said to create public taste and opinion: I believe it does no more than strongly reflect and thereby concentre and strengthen it. The fashionable journal is expected to be a mirror of public opinion in its own party, a brilliant magnifying mirror, in which the mind of the public may see itself look large and handsome. Woe be to the mirror if it presumes to give pictures and images of its own!—it will fall to the ground, even if not shivered at once by popular indignation. Such publications depend for their maintenance on the public which they are to teach, and must therefore, like the pastor of a voluntary flock, pipe only such tunes as suit their auditor's sense

scribed as being; had they been really distinguished from the compositions of other poets merely by mean-

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of harmony. They cannot afford to make ventures, like warm-hearted disinterested individuals. It is far from my intention to deny, that the boldest things are often said, the most extravagant novelties broached in publications of this kind: that the strongest and most sweeping assertions, fit, as might be supposed to startle and shock even the cold and careless,—ascriptions of saintly excellence to men whose unchristian acts of duplicity or cruelty are undenied and undeniable—of worse than human folly and wickedness to men, whom millions have regarded with reverential gratitude, and this in the way of mere assertion, with no attempt at proof, or only the merest shadow of a shade of one,—references to the authority of accusers, who are themselves resting their vague and violent charges on the authority of previous accusers and bitter enemies—will never be ventured upon in the public journal. We have had evidence enough in our day to the contrary.* Still I aver that such things are not done till nothing but truth and charity is risked in the doing of them; till the mass of readers are known to be in such a state of mind, that these bold utterances will move them not at all, or only with a pleasurable excitement. Again, the chief contributors to the leading periodicals are for the most part a class of persons opposed to essential novelty; able men more or less advanced beyond the period of impressible youth, whose intellectual frame is *set*,—who are potent in exposing new follies and false pretensions; but slow to understand the fresh products of genius, unwilling even to believe in them. It is by the young, or at least by the youthful, that accessions to the old stores of thought and imagination are welcomed and placed in the treasury. Still it is a remarkable fact, that the journal, which es-

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* For some considerable evidence on these points I refer the reader to Note 10 in Vol. II. (pp. 656-878), of Archdeacon Hare's new work, The Mission of the Comforter, &c. which contains a thorough investigation of the charges brought against Martin Luther of late years, including those of Bossuet, and a most animated and luminous exposure of the perversions and transmutations, rather than misrepresentations, of his teaching, imputable to certain reviewers.

ness of language and inanity of thought; had they indeed contained nothing more than what is found in

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pecially professed faith in the intellectual progress of the human race, and to be open-eyed to *modern* excellence, should have shewn itself blind to the merits of a body of poetry, in which the spirit of the age, in its noblest and most refined characteristics, is more amply and energetically manifested than in any other. When the luminary first appeared above the horizon, those admirers of new light declared it to be nothing better than green cheese, yet assailed it with as violent outcries as if they thought it able to set the world on fire. If these criticisms excited "a great laugh," this shows with how little expenditure of wit a great laugh may be excited; for whatever talents in that way the writers may have possessed and on other occasions shewn, I think they displayed none of them at the expense of Mr. Wordsworth. The same kind of attack has been repeated of late years with a far more cunning malice and amusing injustice, without exciting any general laughter at all, simply because the time for laughing at a great poet is over and gone. If any laughter is heard now it is but an echo of the past:—if there be any minds that have been dwelling in caves under the earth during the last quarter of a century, *they* may suppose that Wordsworth's fame has never risen above the horizon. Not that every man of sense must needs bow down before it; there are clever persons who deny the greatness of Milton; some ingenious critics have pronounced Homer a barbarian, others have decried Shakespeare, many have looked upon Pindar as a "crazy fellow," and Spenser is thought even by some of the poetical a very great bore. In like manner there may be a man of sense who has no sense of the merits of Mr. Wordsworth's writings; but to be ignorant of their power and influence is to be ignorant of the mind of the age in relation to poetry. The laughter of thirty years ago must have been chiefly produced by a sense of the contrast between the great conception of the Poet entertained by a few, and the small conception which the many were then alone able to form of it. "He strides on so far before us," said Mr. Coleridge of his friend, "that he dwarfs himself in the distance." People saw him as a dwarf yet had a suspicion that he might in reality be a giant. One advantage of the present time to Mr. Wordsworth is this, that poetry is not now the *fashion*.

the parodies and pretended imitations of them; they must have sunk at once, a dead weight, into the slough of oblivion, and have dragged the preface along with them. But year after year increased the number of Mr. Wordsworth's admirers. They were found too not in the lower classes of the reading public, but chiefly among young men of strong sensibility and meditative minds; and their admiration (inflamed perhaps in some degree by opposition) was distinguished by its intensity, I might almost say, by its religious fervour. These facts, and the intellectual energy of the author, which was more or less consciously felt, where it was outwardly and even boisterously denied, meeting with sentiments of aversion to his opinions, and of alarm at their consequences, produced an eddy of criticism, which would of itself have borne up the poems by the violence with which it whirled them round and round. With many parts of this preface in the sense attributed to them and which the words undoubtedly seem to authorize, I never concurred; but on the contrary objected to them as erroneous in principle, and as contradictory (in appearance at least) both to other parts of the same preface, and to the author's own practice in the greater part of the poems themselves. Mr. Wordsworth in his recent collection has, I find, degraded this prefatory disquisition to the end of his second volume, to be read or not at the reader's choice.[7] But he has not, as far as I can discover, an-

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We bestow our "*ignorance, incapability* and *presumption*," or at least our superficiality, incompetence and hastiness on the religious tract or controversial pamphlet, and poetry is resigned to those who have a true taste for it and study it in earnest. S. C.]

[7] ["The observations prefixed to that portion of these Volumes which was published many years ago, under the title of Lyrical Ballads, have so little of a special application to the great part

nounced any change in his poetic creed. At all events, considering it as the source of a controversy, in which I have been honoured more than I deserve by the frequent conjunction of my name with his, I think it expedient to declare once for all, in what points I coincide with the opinions supported in that preface, and in what points I altogether differ. But in order to render myself intelligible I must previously, in as few words as possible, explain my views, first, of a Poem; and secondly, of Poetry itself, in kind, and in essence.

The office of philosophical disquisition consists in just distinction; while it is the privilege of the philosopher to preserve himself constantly aware, that distinction is not division. In order to obtain adequate notions of any truth, we must intellectually separate its distinguishable parts; and this is the technical process of philosophy. But having so done, we must then restore them in our conceptions to the unity, in which they actually co-exist; and this is the result of philosophy. A poem contains the same elements as a prose composition; the difference therefore must consist in a different combination of them, in consequence of a different object being proposed. According to the difference of the object will be the difference of the combination. It is possible, that the object

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of the present enlarged and diversified collection, that they could not with propriety stand as an Introduction to it. Not deeming it, however, expedient to suppress that exposition, slight and imperfect as it is, of the feelings which had determined the choice of the subjects, and the principles which had regulated the composition of these Pieces, I have transferred it to the end of the second volume, to be attended to, or not, at the pleasure of the Reader." Pref. to edition of 1815.

This preface is now to be found in Vol. II. p. 303, of the edition of 1840. Ed.]

may be merely to facilitate the recollection of any given facts or observations by artificial arrangement; and the composition will be a poem, merely because it is distinguished from prose by metre, or by rhyme, or by both conjointly. In this, the lowest sense, a man might attribute the name of a poem to the well known enumeration of the days in the several months;

> "Thirty days hath September,
> April, June, and November," &c.

and others of the same class and purpose. And as a particular pleasure is found in anticipating the recurrence of sounds and quantities, all compositions that have this charm super-added, whatever be their contents, *may* be entitled poems.

So much for the superficial form. A difference of object and contents supplies an additional ground of distinction. The immediate purpose may be the communication of truths; either of truth absolute and demonstrable, as in works of science; or of facts experienced and recorded, as in history. Pleasure, and that of the highest and most permanent kind, may result from the attainment of the end; but it is not itself the immediate end. In other works the communication of pleasure may be the immediate purpose; and though truth, either moral or intellectual, ought to be the ultimate end, yet this will distinguish the character of the author, not the class to which the work belongs. Blest indeed is that state of society, in which the immediate purpose would be baffled by the perversion of the proper ultimate end; in which no charm of diction or imagery could exempt the BATHYLLUS even of an Anacreon, or the ALEXIS of Virgil, from disgust and aversion!

But the communication of pleasure may be the immediate object of a work not metrically composed; and that object may have been in a high degree attained,

as in novels and romances. Would then the mere superaddition of metre, with or without rhyme, entitle these to the name of poems? The answer is, that nothing can permanently please, which does not contain in itself the reason why it is so, and not otherwise. If metre be superadded, all other parts must be made consonant with it. They must be such, as to justify the perpetual and distinct attention to each part, which an exact correspondent recurrence of accent and sound are calculated to excite. The final definition then, so deduced, may be thus worded. A poem is that species of composition, which is opposed to works of science, by proposing for its *immediate* object pleasure, not truth; and from all other species—(having *this* object in common with it)—it is discriminated by proposing to itself such delight from the *whole*, as is compatible with a distinct gratification from each component *part*.

Controversy is not seldom excited in consequence of the disputants attaching each a different meaning to the same word; and in few instances has this been more striking, than in disputes concerning the present subject. If a man chuses to call every composition a poem, which is rhyme, or measure, or both, I must leave his opinion uncontroverted. The distinction is at least competent to characterize the writer's intention. If it were subjoined, that the whole is likewise entertaining or affecting, as a tale, or as a series of interesting reflections, I of course admit this as another fit ingredient of a poem, and an additional merit. But if the definition sought for be that of a *legitimate* poem, I answer, it must be one, the parts of which mutually support and explain each other; all in their proportion harmonizing with, and supporting the purpose and known influences of metrical arrangement. The philosophic critics of all ages coincide with the ultimate judgment of all countries, in equally denying the praises

of a just poem, on the one hand, to a series of striking lines or distiches, each of which, absorbing the whole attention of the reader to itself, becomes disjoined from its context, and forms a separate whole, instead of a harmonizing part; and on the other hand, to an unsustained composition, from which the reader collects rapidly the general result unattracted by the component parts. The reader should be carried forward, not merely or chiefly by the mechanical impulse of curiosity, or by a restless desire to arrive at the final solution; but by the pleasurable activity of mind excited by the attractions of the journey itself. Like the motion of a serpent, which the Egyptians made the emblem of intellectual power; or like the path of sound through the air;—at every step he pauses and half recedes, and from the retrogressive movement collects the force which again carries him onward. *Præcipitandus est liber spiritus*, says Petronius most happily.[8] The epithet, *liber*, here balances the preceding verb;

[8] [These words occur in the passage in which Petronius is supposed to attack Lucan. *Cæteri enim, aut non viderunt viam qua irietur ad carmen, aut visam timuerunt calcare. Ecce, belli civilis ingens opus quisquis attigerit, nisi plenus literis, sub onere labetur. Non enim res gestæ versibus comprehendendæ sunt, quod longe melius Historici faciunt; sed per ambages, Deorumque ministeria, et fabulosum sententiarum tormentum præcipitandus est liber spiritus; ut potius furentis animi vaticinatio appareat, quam religiosæ orationis sub testibus fides: tanquam si placet hic impetus, etiamsi nondum recepit ultimam manum. Satyric.* p. 63. edit. *Lug. Bat.* 1623. And then follows a specimen of a new *Pharsalia*, which a great many learned critics, to the confusion of ordinary readers, prefer to Lucan's. Douza says, *se hunc impetum pluris fucere, quam trecenta Cordubulensis illius volumina.* Ed.]

Petronius!—all the muses weep for thee,
But every tear shall scald thy memory.—

So speaks Cowper in a strong passage upon this "polish'd and high-finish'd foe to truth," in his poem called The Progress of Error. Southey's edit. vol. viii. p. 155-6. S. C.]

and it is not easy to conceive more meaning condensed in fewer words.

But if this should be admitted as a satisfactory character of a poem, we have still to seek for a definition of poetry. The writings of Plato, and Jeremy Taylor, and Burnet's Theory of the Earth,[9] furnish undeniable proofs that poetry of the highest kind may exist without metre, and even without the contradistinguishing objects of a poem. The first chapter of Isaiah—(indeed a very large proportion of the whole book)—is poetry in the most emphatic sense; yet it would be not less irrational than strange to assert, that pleasure, and not truth was the immediate object of the prophet. In short, whatever specific import we attach to the word, Poetry, there will be found involved in it, as a necessary consequence, that a poem of any length neither can be, nor ought to be, all poetry. Yet if an harmonious whole is to be produced, the remaining parts must be preserved in keeping with the poetry; and this can be no otherwise effected than by such a studied selection and artificial arrangement, as will partake of one, though not a peculiar property of poetry. And this again can be no other than the property of exciting a more continuous and equal attention than the language of prose aims at, whether colloquial or written.

My own conclusions on the nature of poetry, in the strictest use of the word, have been in part anticipated in some of the remarks on the Fancy and Imagination in the first volume of this work. What is poetry?—is

[9] [*Telluris Theoria Sacra.* London, 1681: by Thomas Burnet, D.D. The work was translated into English by order of King Charles, and was in a sixth edit. in 1726. The author, a native of Scotland, and Master of Sutton's Hospital, London, wrote also *De Statu Mortuorum et Resurgentium*, and several other books, died Sep. 27, 1715. S. C.]

so nearly the same question with, what is a poet?—that the answer to the one is involved in the solution of the other. For it is a distinction resulting from the poetic genius itself, which sustains and modifies the images, thoughts, and emotions of the poet's own mind.

The poet, described in ideal perfection, brings the whole soul of man into activity, with the subordination of its faculties to each other according to their relative worth and dignity. He diffuses a tone and spirit of unity, that blends, and (as it were) *fuses*, each into each, by that synthetic and magical power, to which I would exclusively appropriate the name of Imagination. This power, first put in action by the will and understanding, and retained under their irremissive, though gentle and unnoticed, control, *laxis effertur habenis*, reveals itself in the balance or reconcilement of opposite or discordant qualities: of sameness, with difference; of the general with the concrete; the idea with the image; the individual with the representative; the sense of novelty and freshness with old and familiar objects; a more than usual state of emotion with more than usual order; judgment ever awake and steady self-possession with enthusiasm and feeling profound or vehement; and while it blends and harmonizes the natural and the artificial, still subordinates art to nature; the manner to the matter; and our admiration of the poet to our sympathy with the poetry. Doubtless, as Sir John Davies observes of the soul—(and his words may with slight alteration be applied, and even more appropriately, to the poetic Imagination)—

> Doubtless this could not be, but that she turns
> Bodies to *spirit* by sublimation strange,
> As fire converts to fire the things it burns,
> As we our food into our nature change.
>
> From their gross matter she abstracts *their* forms,
> And draws a kind of quintessence from things;

Which to her proper nature she transforms
To bear them light on her celestial wings.

*Thus* does she, when from *individual states*
She doth abstract the universal kinds;
*Which then re-clothed in divers names and fates*
*Steal access through the senses to our minds.*[10]

Finally, Good Sense is the Body of poetic genius, Fancy its Drapery, Motion its Life, and Imagination the Soul that is every where, and in each; and forms all into one graceful and intelligent whole.[11]

## CHAPTER II.

*The specific symptoms of poetic power elucidated in a critical analysis of Shakespeare's* VENUS *and* ADONIS, *and* RAPE OF LUCRECE.[1]

IN the application of these principles to purposes of practical criticism, as employed in the appraisement of works more or less imperfect, I have endeavoured to discover what the qualities in a poem are, which may be deemed promises and specific symptoms of poetic power, as distinguished from general talent determined to poetic composition by accidental motives, by an act of the will, rather than by the inspiration of a genial and productive nature. In this investigation, I could not, I thought, do better, than keep before me.

[10] [Of the Soul of Man. s. 4. Mr. Coleridge's alterations are printed in italics. Ed.]

[11] [The reader is referred generally to Mr. Coleridge's Literary Remains, II. pp. 7-12. Ed.]

[1] [See Lit. Remains, II. pp. 54-60. Ed.]

the earliest work of the greatest genius, that perhaps human nature has yet produced, our *myriad-minded*[2] Shakespeare. I mean the VENUS AND ADONIS, and the LUCRECE; works which give at once strong promises of the strength, and yet obvious proofs of the immaturity, of his genius. From these I abstracted the following marks, as characteristics of original poetic genius in general.

1. In the VENUS AND ADONIS, the first and most obvious excellence is the perfect sweetness of the versification; its adaptation to the subject; and the power displayed in varying the march of the words without passing into a loftier and more majestic rhythm than was demanded by the thoughts, or permitted by the propriety of preserving a sense of melody predominant. The delight in richness and sweetness of sound, even to a faulty excess, if it be evidently original, and not the result of an easily imitable mechanism, I regard as a highly favourable promise in the compositions of a young man. The man that hath not music in his soul[3] can indeed never be a genuine poet. Imagery,—(even taken from nature, much more when transplanted from books, as travels, voyages, and works of natural history), —affecting incidents, just thoughts, interesting personal or domestic feelings, and with these the art of their combination or intertexture in the form of a poem,—may all by incessant effort be acquired as a trade, by a man of talent and much reading, who, as I

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[2] Ἀνὴρ μυριόνους, a phrase which I have borrowed from a Greek monk, who applies it to a Patriarch of Constantinople. I might have said, that I have reclaimed, rather than borrowed, it: for it seems to belong to Shakespeare, *de jure singulari, et ex privilegio naturæ.*

[3] ["The man that hath not music in himself"—Merchant of Venice, iv. sc. 1. Ed.]

once before observed, has mistaken an intense desire of poetic reputation for a natural poetic genius; the love of the arbitrary end for a possession of the peculiar means. But the sense of musical delight, with the power of producing it, is a gift of imagination; and this together with the power of reducing multitude into unity of effect, and modifying a series of thoughts by some one predominant thought or feeling, may be cultivated and improved, but can never be learned. It is in these that "*poeta nascitur non fit.*"

2. A second promise of genius is the choice of subjects very remote from the private interests and circumstances of the writer himself. At least I have found, that where the subject is taken immediately from the author's personal sensations and experiences, the excellence of a particular poem is but an equivocal mark, and often a fallacious pledge, of genuine poetic power. We may perhaps remember the tale of the statuary, who had acquired considerable reputation for the legs of his goddesses, though the rest of the statue accorded but indifferently with ideal beauty; till his wife, elated by her husband's praises, modestly acknowledged that she had been his constant model. In the VENUS AND ADONIS this proof of poetic power exists even to excess. It is throughout as if a superiour spirit more intuitive, more intimately conscious, even than the characters themselves, not only of every outward look and act, but of the flux and reflux of the mind in all its subtlest thoughts and feelings, were placing the whole before our view; himself meanwhile unparticipating in the passions, and actuated only by that pleasurable excitement, which had resulted from the energetic fervour of his own spirit in so vividly exhibiting what it had so accurately and profoundly contemplated. I think, I should have conjectured from

these poems, that even then the great instinct, which impelled the poet to the drama, was secretly working in him, prompting him—by a series and never broken chain of imagery, always vivid and, because unbroken, often minute; by the highest effort of the picturesque in words, of which words are capable, higher perhaps than was ever realized by any other poet, even Dante not excepted;[4]—to provide a substitute for that visual language, that constant intervention and running comment by tone, look and gesture, which in his dramatic

[4] ["Consider how he paints," says Mr. Carlyle, "he has a great power of vision; seizes the very type of a thing; presents that and nothing more. You remember the first view he gets of the Hall of Dite; *red* pinnacle, red hot cone of iron glowing through the immensity of gloom;—so vivid, so distinct, visible at once and for ever! It is as an emblem of the whole genius of Dante." "Milton," says Lessing in his Laokoon, "can indeed fill no galleries. Yet is the Par. Lost the first Epic after Homer no whit the less because it affords few pictures, than the History of Christ is a Poem, because we cannot put so much as a nail's head upon it without hitting on a place which has employed a crowd of the greatest artists." "A poetic picture is not necessarily that which can be converted into a material picture; but every stroke or combination of strokes, by which the Poet makes his object so sensuous to us, that we are more conscious of this object than of his words, may be called picturesque." Thus Dante's *squilla da lonteno* (Purg. c. viii. l. 5.) may well be called *a picture*. His picture-words have not done much for the material painter's art, if we may judge by Flaxman's illustrations. The famous image in the *Purgatorio*

solo guardando
A guisa di leon quando si posæ,

is, as has been shewn, not a mere presentation of "*picturable matter*," but a picture ready drawn and "so clearly visible that the pencil cannot make its outline clearer." (See Art. on Pindar. Q. Review, March 1834.) Yet it would be nothing in a material painting, because the illustration and the thing illustrated could not be given together. S. C.]

works he was entitled to expect from the players. His Venus and Adonis seem at once the characters themselves, and the whole representation of those characters by the most consummate actors. You seem to be told nothing, but to see and hear every thing. Hence it is, from the perpetual activity of attention required on the part of the reader; from the rapid flow, the quick change, and the playful nature of the thoughts and images; and above all from the alienation, and, if I may hazard such an expression, the utter *aloofness* of the poet's own feelings, from those of which he is at once the painter and the analyst;—that though the very subject cannot but detract from the pleasure of a delicate mind, yet never was poem less dangerous on a moral account. Instead of doing as Ariosto, and as, still more offensively, Wieland has done, instead of degrading and deforming passion into appetite, the trials of love into the struggles of concupiscence;—Shakespeare has here represented the animal impulse itself, so as to preclude all sympathy with it, by dissipating the reader's notice among the thousand outward images, and now beautiful, now fanciful circumstances, which form its dresses and its scenery; or by diverting our attention from the main subject by those frequent witty or profound reflections, which the poet's ever active mind has deduced from, or connected with, the imagery and the incidents. The reader is forced into too much action to sympathize with the merely passive of our nature. As little can a mind thus roused and awakened be brooded on by mean and indistinct emotion, as the low, lazy mist can creep upon the surface of a lake, while a strong gale is driving it onward in waves and billows.

3. It has been before observed that images, however beautiful, though faithfully copied from nature, and as

accurately represented in words, do not of themselves characterize the poet. They become proofs of original genius only as far as they are modified by a predominant passion; or by associated thoughts or images awakened by that passion; or when they have the effect of reducing multitude to unity,[5] or succession to an instant; or lastly, when a human and intellectual life is transferred to them from the poet's own spirit,

> Which shoots its being through earth, sea, and air.[6]

In the two following lines for instance, there is nothing objectionable, nothing which would preclude them from forming, in their proper place, part of a descriptive poem:

> Behold yon row of pines, that shorn and bow'd
> Bend from the sea-blast, seen at twilight eve.

But with a small alteration of rhythm, the same words would be equally in their place in a book of topography, or in a descriptive tour. The same image will rise into a semblance of poetry if thus conveyed:

> Yon row of bleak and visionary pines,
> By twilight glimpse discerned, mark! how they flee
> From the fierce sea-blast, all their tresses wild
> Streaming before them.

I have given this as an illustration, by no means as an instance, of that particular excellence which I had in view, and in which Shakespeare even in his earliest, as in his latest, works surpasses all other poets. It is

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[5] ["The truth is he does not possess imagination in its highest form,—that of stamping *il più nell' uno.*" Table Talk, p. 281, 2nd. edit.

"The Imagination modifies images, and gives unity to variety; it sees all things in one, *il più nell' uno.*" Ib. p. 306. Ed.]

[6] [France. An Ode. Mr. C.'s P. W. i. p. 132. Ed.]

by this, that he still gives a dignity and a passion to the objects which he presents. Unaided by any previous excitement, they burst upon us at once in life and in power,—

> "Full many a glorious morning have I seen
> *Flatter* the mountain tops with sovereign eye."[7]
>
> "Not mine own fears, nor the prophetic soul
> Of the wide world dreaming on things to come—
> * * * * * *
> * * * * * *
> The mortal moon hath her eclipse endured,
> And the sad augurs mock their own presage;
> Incertainties now crown themselves assur'd,
> And Peace proclaims olives of endless age.
> Now with the drops of this most balmy time
> My love looks fresh, and Death to me subscribes,
> Since spite of him, I'll live in this poor rhyme,
> While he insults o'er dull and speechless tribes.
> And thou in this shalt find thy monument,
> When tyrant's crests, and tombs of brass are spent."[8]

As of higher worth, so doubtless still more characteristic of poetic genius does the imagery become, when it moulds and colours itself to the circumstances, passion, or character, present and foremost in the mind. For unrivalled instances of this excellence, the reader's own memory will refer him to the LEAR, OTHELLO, in short to which not of the "*great, ever living, dead man's*" dramatic works? *Inopem me copia fecit.* How true it is to nature, he has himself, finely expressed in the instance of love in his 98th Sonnet.

> "From you have I been absent in the spring,
> When proud-pied April drest in all its trim,

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[7] [Shakespeare's 33rd Sonnet. Ed.] [8] [Sonnet cvii. Ed.]

Hath put a spirit of youth in every thing;
That heavy Saturn laugh'd and leap'd with him.
Yet nor the lays of birds, nor the sweet smell
Of different flowers in odour and in hue,
Could make me any summer's story tell,
Or from their proud lap pluck them, where they grew:
Nor did I wonder at the lilies white,
Nor praise the deep vermilion in the rose;
They were, tho' sweet, but figures of delight,
Drawn after you, you pattern of all those.
Yet seem'd it winter still, and, you away,
*As with your shadow, I with these did play!*" [9]

Scarcely less sure, or if a less valuable, not less indispensable mark

*Γόνιμου μὲν ποιητοῦ* ———
——— *ὅστις ῥημα γενναῖον λάκοι,*[10]

will the imagery supply, when, with more than the power of the painter, the poet gives us the liveliest image of succession with the feeling of simultaneousness:—

With this, he breaketh from the sweet embrace
Of those fair arms, which bound him to her breast,
And homeward through the dark laund runs apace;—
* * * * * *

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[9] [See Table Talk, pp. 229-31, 2nd edit. for Mr. Coleridge's general view of Shakespeare's Sonnets, and also Mr. Knight's valuable essay on the same subject in that beautiful edition of our great poet by which he has rendered so signal and enduring a service to the cause of English literature. Ed.]

[10] [Aristoph. *Ranæ.* v. 96-7. Mr. Frere, in the tone of the Bacchus of the play, translates thus:

There's not one hearty Poet amongst them all
That's fit to risque an adventurous valiant phrase.

But it is obvious that Mr. Coleridge meant by *γόνιμος ποιητής*, the genuine poet. Ed.]

*Look! how a bright star shooteth from the sky,*
*So glides he in the night from Venus' eye.*[11]

4. The last character I shall mention, which would prove indeed but little, except as taken conjointly with the former;—yet without which the former could scarce exist in a high degree, and (even if this were possible) would give promises only of transitory flashes and a meteoric power;—is depth, and energy of thought. No man was ever yet a great poet, without being at the same time a profound philosopher. For poetry is the blossom and the fragrancy of all human knowledge, human thoughts, human passions, emotions, language. In Shakespeare's poems the creative power and the intellectual energy wrestle as in a war embrace. Each in its excess of strength seems to threaten the extinction of the other. At length in the drama they were reconciled, and fought each with its shield before the breast of the other. Or like two rapid streams, that, at their first meeting within narrow and rocky banks, mutually strive to repel each other and intermix reluctantly and in tumult; but soon finding a wider channel and more yielding shores blend, and dilate, and flow on in one current and with one voice. The VENUS AND ADONIS did not perhaps allow the display of the deeper passions. But the story of Lucretia seems to favour and even demand their intensest workings. And yet we find in *Shakespeare's* management of the tale neither pathos, nor any other *dramatic* quality. There is the same minute and faithful imagery as in the former poem, in the same vivid colours, inspirited by the same impetuous vigour of thought, and diverging and contracting with the same activity of the assimilative and of the modifying faculties; and with a yet larger

[11] [Venus and Adonis. Ed.]

display, a yet wider range of knowledge and reflection; and lastly, with the same perfect dominion, often domination, over the whole world of language. What then shall we say? even this; that Shakespeare, no mere child of nature; no *automaton* of genius; no passive vehicle of inspiration possessed by the spirit, not possessing it; first studied patiently, meditated deeply, understood minutely, till knowledge, become habitual and intuitive, wedded itself to his habitual feelings, and at length gave birth to that stupendous power, by which he stands alone, with no equal or second in his own class; to that power, which seated him on one of the two glory-smitten summits of the poetic mountain, with Milton as his compeer not rival. While the former darts himself forth, and passes into all the forms of human character and passion, the one Proteus of the fire and the flood; the other attracts all forms and things to himself, into the unity of his own ideal. All things and modes of action shape themselves anew in the being of Milton; while Shakespeare becomes all things, yet for ever remaining himself.[12] O what great men hast thou not produced, England, my country!—Truly indeed—

*We* must be free or die, who speak the tongue,
Which Shakespeare spake; the faith and morals hold,
Which Milton held. In every thing we are sprung
Of earth's first blood, have titles manifold.[13]

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[12] ["Shakespeare's poetry is characterless, that is, it does not reflect the individual Shakespeare; but John Milton is in every line of the Paradise Lost." Table Talk, p. 67. Ed.]

[13] [Wordsworth's P. W. iii. p. 190, edit. 1840. Ed.]

[Mr. Wordsworth's noble Preface, often referred to in these pages, contains as high a tribute to

——— that mighty orb of song
The divine Milton———

(to quote the author's words in another place,) as one great poet

## CHAPTER III.

*Striking points of difference between the Poets of the present age and those of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries—Wish expressed for the union of the characteristic merits of both.*

HRISTENDOM, from its first settlement on feudal rights, has been so far one great body, however imperfectly organized, that a similar spirit will be found in each period to have been acting in all its members. The study of Shakespeare's *poems*—(I do

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could pay to another. (See also his three fine sonnets relating to Milton, Poet. Works. iii, pp. 188-9-90.) It would have been out of his way to speak of Milton's prose—though such prose as none but the author of Paradise Lost could have written. If matter is *spiritus in coagulo*,* as some philosophers aver, this grand Miltonic prose may fancifully be called *poësis in coagulo*. Yet I think it is more truly and properly *prose* than the high-strained passages of Jeremy Taylor.

Dante is by some accounted a greater poet than Milton, as being a greater philosopher; I think that he shewed the philosopher in his poetry too much to be the best of poets, especially in the *Paradiso*. A poet should avoid science, which is ever in a process of change and development, and abide by the fixed and eternal; great part of that thirteenth century lore contained in Dante's poem is dead, and but for the poetic spices with which it is embalmed, and the swathe-bands of the poetic form in which it is preserved, would long since have been scattered

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* "When Leibnitz calls matter *the sleep-state* of the monads, or when Hemsterhuis names it—*den geronnenen Geist*—curdled spirit,—there lies a meaning in these expressions, &c." *Transfc. Id.* p. 190. See also Lit. Remains, iii. p. 339.

not include his dramatic works, eminently as they too

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abroad, like any unsepulchred dust and ashes. I am here speaking of physics and metaphysics: if wise reflections, just sentiments and deep moral and spiritual maxims are referred to in this comparison, then surely the English poet has greatly the advantage in thought and still more in expression. Philosophy in the song of Milton is better harmonized with poetry than in that of Dante; it is fused into the poetic mass by something accompanying it which appeals to the heart and moral being; or it is introduced obliquely, with a touch of tenderness, which brings it into unison with the human actions and passions of the poem, as in that beautiful passage,

Others apart sate on a hill retired—

which seems so like a new voice of *The Preacher*, pathetically satirizing the efforts of man after speculative knowledge and insight. There is to be sure some fictitious or defunct astronomy and *spherology* in the great poem of Milton;† but it is lightly touched on and imaginatively presented; compare the passages that treat of these subjects in the Paradise Lost, especially that noble speech of the Angel‡ in the eighth book, with the first and second cantos of the *Paradiso;* surely the later poetry is to the earlier as "Hyperion to a Satyr," so far does it exceed in richness and poetic grace. *Bizzarra Teologia!* says a Commentator on a passage in the *Purgatorio* (C. iii. l. 18). *Bizzarra Filosofia* may we say of that in the *Paradiso* (C. I. at the end), which begins finely, but ends with making specific gravity depend upon original sin; unless nothing but a fanciful flight is intended. What a pomp of philosophy, exclaims M. Merian, speaking of this passage,—and all to usher in a foolery! "Every great poet is a profound philosopher:" that is, he sees deep into the life and soul of the things which are already known—and has a special mastery over them; but is not necessarily beyond his age in speculative science. Certainly this cannot be predicated either of Dante or of Milton.

I own myself of the vulgar herd in greatly preferring the first to the other sections of Dante's Poem—nay even venture to

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* Par. Lost, b. ii. l. 555-61. † Ib. b. iii. l. 481, et seq.

‡ Lines 39-178.

deserve that title)—led me to a more careful exam-

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think, that if it had not been both more striking than those two other parts in its general structure and more abundant in passages of power and of beauty, the *Divina Commedia* would never have been a famous poem at all. The mere plan of describing the unseen world in three divisions would not have made it so; there were Paradise Losts before Milton's which it would be time lost to read. Milton is finer in Hell than in Heaven, finest of all in his earthly Paradise, and Dante's *Inferno* is better than his *Purgatorio* or *Paradiso*, because he could put more of this earth into it,—conform it more to the only world the form of which he was acquainted with. Men cannot make bricks without straw nor fine houses without bricks or stones, nor fine poems without sensuous material.

The *Divina Commedia* is more considerable in religion and ecclesiastical politics, I think,—on which last head there was some accordance betwixt its author and Milton,—than for its philosophy; the highest conception of it is that of Mr. Carlyle, that it is "the soul of the Middle Ages rendered rhythmically visible"—the voice of "ten Christian centuries;"—"the Thought they lived by bodied forth in everlasting music." Its author is great, as Mr. C. observes, from "fiery emphasis," and intensity rather than from comprehensiveness or catholicity of spirit. His was "not a great Catholic—was even a narrow sectarian mind." If Mediævalism in Dante's day was a sectarian thing, cut off from thought expanding beyond it—*then*, when the torch had not been kindled in the hand of Des Cartes, and the revolt against the dominant Aristotelianism was yet to begin, what must it be now, when thought has been expanding during six more centuries, whilst It remains fixed, rigid—not lifeless as a mummy—but imprisoning the life it has with bands and cerements in a body of death!

But Dante's imagination was as mediæval as his theology and philosophy; hovering continually between the horrible sublime and the hideous grotesque, and sometimes saved only from the ridiculous by the chaste severity of a style which is the very Diana of poetical composition. Witness, amongst a cloud of witnesses, his Minos, whom he has equipped with a tail long and lithe enough to go nine times round his body!—the wise conqueror and righteous judge is degraded into a worse monster than the Minotaur, in

ination of the contemporary poets both in England and in other countries. But my attention was especially fixed on those of Italy, from the birth to the death of Shakespeare; that being the country in which the fine arts had been most sedulously, and hitherto most successfully cultivated. Abstracted from the degrees and peculiarities of individual genius, the properties common to the good writers of each period seem to establish one striking point of difference between the poetry of the fifteenth and sixteenth centu-

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order that he may indicate every circle in a fantastic hell down to the ninth and last. How would Pindar have been horror-stricken to see the Hero thus turned into a hideous automaton sign-post! In Dante's hands the demigod sinks into the beast-man, while in those of Milton devils appear as deities, fit indeed to obtain adoration from the dazzled mind,—not frightful fiends but wicked angels—specious and seductive as they actually are to the human heart and imagination. Milton has borrowed from Dante, but how has he multiplied his splendours, how nobly exchanged his "detestable horrors" * for a pageantry of Hell that far exceeds the luminous pomp of *his* Paradise in sublimity and beauty!

We, who feel thus can enter into Mr. Carlyle's high notion of Dante's genius, yet own the justice of Mr. Landor's searching and severe criticism upon the products of it, though the two views appear dissimilar as day and night. The one displays the D. C. under a rich moonlight, which clothes its dreary flats and rugged hollows with sublime shadow; the other under a cold keen dawning daylight, which shows the whole landscape, but not its noblest countenance. Mr. C. so far *idealizes* his Hero Poet, that without keeping out of view his characteristic faults he, with a far finer economy, converts them into cognate virtues; the poet's stern, angry temper, for instance, appears through Mr. C.'s glorifying medium like earnest sincerity, religious severity,

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* For a striking account of these "detestable horrors" see Mr. Leigh Hunt's Fancy and Imagination.

ries, and that of the present age. The remark may perhaps be extended to the sister art of painting. At least the latter will serve to illustrate the former. In the present age the poet—(I would wish to be understood as speaking generally, and without allusion to individual names)—seems to propose to himself as his main object, and as that which is the most characteristic of his art, new and striking images; with incidents that interest the affections or excite the curiosity. Both his characters and his descriptions he

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a spiritual sadness; and he contrasts his "implacable, grim-trenchant face" with his "soft ethereal soul" more beautifully perhaps than *quite* truthfully; for Dante's soul was not all softness. Indeed it escapes this powerful advocate that the heroic poet was bitter. Are the noblest minds embittered then by evil and calamity? Do they *clothe* themselves *with cursing as with a garment*, and forget that judgment as well as vengeance belongs to God? Dante's soul was full of pity, say other apologists, but he deemed it sinful to commiserate those whom God's justice had condemned. *Justice* forsooth!—and how knew he *whom* God had condemned—that He had sunk Brutus and Cassius into the nethermost pit, and doomed poor Pope Celestine to be wasp-stung to all eternity on the banks of Acheron? I deny not his pity or his piety; yet I say that thus to fabricate visions of divine wrath upon individuals was a bad sign both of his age and of himself—the sign of a violent and presumptuous spirit. Again, are the noblest minds *moody* and *mournful* as Dante is described to have been? Rather they

> bate no jot
> Of heart or hope, but still bear up and steer
> Right onward.

Thus did John Milton, whom with Mr. Landor I cannot help honouring and admiring above any other poet of past times except Shakespeare. His indeed was what Mr. Carlyle ascribes to Johnson, "a gigantic calmness"—nay more, an almost angelic serenity and cheerfulness; to judge from the tone of his writings with which the tenour of his life seems to agree. S. C.]

renders, as much as possible, specific and individual, even to a degree of portraiture. In his diction and metre, on the other hand, he is comparatively careless. The measure is either constructed on no previous system, and acknowledges no justifying principle but that of the writer's convenience; or else some mechanical movement is adopted, of which one couplet or stanza is so far an adequate specimen, as that the occasional differences appear evidently to arise from accident, or the qualities of the language itself, not from meditation and an intelligent purpose. And the language from Pope's translation of Homer, to Darwin's Temple of Nature,[1] may, notwithstanding some illustrious exceptions, be too faithfully characterized, as claiming to be poetical for no better reason, than that it would be intolerable in conversation or in prose. Though alas! even our prose writings, nay even the style of our more set discourses, strive to be in the fashion, and trick themselves out in the soiled and over-worn finery of the meretricious muse. It is true that of late a great improvement in this respect is observable in our most popular writers. But it is equally true, that this recurrence to plain sense and genuine mother English is far from being general; and that the composition of our novels, magazines, public harangues, and the like is commonly as trivial in thought, and yet enigmatic in expression, as if Echo and Sphinx had laid their heads together to construct it. Nay, even of those who have most rescued themselves from this contagion, I should plead inwardly guilty to the charge of duplicity or cowardice, If I withheld my conviction, that few have guarded the purity of their native tongue with that jealous care, which the sublime Dante in his

[1] First published in 1803.

tract *De la volgare Eloquenza*, declares to be the first duty of a poet.[2] For language is the armoury of the human mind; and at once contains the trophies of its past, and the weapons of its future conquests. *Animadverte*, says Hobbes, *quam sit ab improprietate*

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[2] [See I. c. xix. s. II. c. i. The spirit breathing in this Fragment may justify what Mr. C. says; but Dante does not appear to have used the expression attributed to him in the text. Ed.

It seems probable that Mr. Coleridge alluded to the following passage, which I found written by his hand in a copy of the first edition of Joan of Arc.

*Degne di sommo stilo sono le somme Cose, ciò è, l'Amore, la Libertà, la Virtù, l'Immortalità, e quelle altre Cose che per cagion di esse sono nella Mente nostra conceputi; per che per niun Accidente non siano fatte vili. Guardisi adunque ciascuno, e discerna quello che dicemo: e quando vuole queste somme Cose puramente cantare, prima * bevendo nel Fonto di Elicona, ponga sicuramente a* l'accordata Lyra *il sommo Plettro, e costumatamente cominci. Ma a fare questa Canzone, e questa Divisione, come si dee—quì è la Difficoltà, quì è la Fatica: perciò che mai senza Acume d'Ingegno, ne senza Assiduità d'Arte, ne senza Abito di Scienze, non si potrà fare. E questi sono quelli, che 'l Poeta nel* L. VI. *de la Eneide chiami Diletti da Dio, e da la ardente Virtù alzati al Cielo, e Figlinoli di Dio, avegna che figuratamente parli.*

*E però si confessa la Sciocchezza di coloro, i quali senza Arte, e senza Scienza, confidando si solamente del loro Ingegno, si pongono a cantar sommamente le Cose somme. Adunque cessino questi tali da tanta loro Presunzione, e se per la loro naturale Desidia sono Oche, non vogliano l'Aquila, che altamente vola, imitare.*

Dante, de la volgare Eloquenza, l. ii. c. 4.† S. C.]

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* That is, waiting for, and seizing the moment of deep Feeling, and stirring Imagination, after having by stedfast accurate Observation, and by calm and profound Meditation, filled himself, as it were, with his subject. S. T. C.

† [This Italian version of the treatise *De vulg. Eloq.* was by Trissino, according to A. Zeno, who says that the translator has, in many places, confounded and altered the sense. The Latin tractate, which the Editor refers to, is by Dante himself. S. C.]

*verborum pronum hominibus prolabi in errores circa ipsas res!*[3] *Sat* [*vero*], *says Sennertus,*[4] *in hâc vitæ brevitate et naturæ obscuritate, rerum est, quibus cognoscendis tempus impendatur, ut* [*confusis et multivocis*] *sermonibus intelligendis illud consumere opus non sit.* [*Eheu! quantas strages paravere verba nubila, quæ tot dicunt ut nihil dicunt;—nubes potius, e quibus et in rebus politicis et in ecclesia turbines et tonitrua erumpunt!*] *Et proinde recte dictum putamus a Platone in Gorgia:* ὃς ἂν τὰ ὀνόματα εἰδεῖ, εἴσεται καὶ τὰ πράγματα: *et ab Epicteto,* ἀρχὴ παιδεύσεως ἡ τῶν ὀνομάτων ἐπίσκεψις: *et prudentissime Galenus scribit,* ἡ τῶν ὀνομάτων χρῆσις ταραχθεῖσα καὶ τὴν τῶν πραγμάτων ἐπιταράττει γνῶσιν.

*Egregie vero J. C. Scaliger, in Lib. I. de Plantis:* Est primum, inquit, sapientis officium, bene sentire, ut sibi vivat: proximum, bene loqui, ut patriæ vivat."

Something analogous to the materials and structure of modern poetry I seem to have noticed—(but here I beg to be understood as speaking with the utmost diffidence)—in our common landscape painters. Their foregrounds and intermediate distances are comparatively unattractive: while the main interest of the landscape is thrown into the back ground, where mountains and torrents and castles forbid the eye to proceed, and nothing tempts it to trace its way back again. But in the works of the great Italian and

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[3] [*Examinatio et Emendatio Mathematicæ hodiernæ.* (Dial. II. vol. IV. p. 83 of Molesworth's edit.) S. C.]

[4] [See the chapter p. 193, *De nominibus novis Paracelsicis* in his folio works, Leyden 1676. The words in brackets, are not in the original, and there are several omissions.—Ed. The sentence cited as from the Gorgias, is not contained, I believe, in that dialogue. S. C.]

Flemish masters, the front and middle objects of the landscape are the most obvious and determinate, the interest gradually dies away in the back ground, and the charm and peculiar worth of the picture consists, not so much in the specific objects which it conveys to the understanding in a visual language formed by the substitution of figures for words, as in the beauty and harmony of the colours, lines, and expression, with which the objects are represented. Hence novelty of subject was rather avoided than sought for. Superiour excellence in the manner of treating the same subjects was the trial and test of the artist's merit.

Not otherwise is it with the more polished poets of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, especially those of Italy. The imagery is almost always general: sun, moon, flowers, breezes, murmuring streams, warbling songsters, delicious shades, lovely damsels cruel as fair, nymphs, naiads, and goddesses, are the materials which are common to all, and which each shaped and arranged according to his judgment or fancy, little solicitous to add or to particularize. If we make an honourable exception in favour of some English poets, the thoughts too are as little novel as the images; and the fable of their narrative poems, for the most part drawn from mythology, or sources of equal notoriety, derive their chief attractions from the manner of treating them; from impassioned flow, or picturesque arrangement. In opposition to the present age, and perhaps in as faulty an extreme, they placed the essence of poetry in the *art*. The excellence, at which they aimed, consisted in the exquisite polish of the diction, combined with perfect simplicity. This their prime object they attained by the avoidance of every word, which a *gentleman* would *not* use in dignified conversation, and of every word and phrase, which

none but a *learned* man *would* use; by the studied position of words and phrases, so that not only each part should be melodious in itself, but contribute to the harmony of the whole, each note referring and conducting to the melody of all the foregoing and following words of the same period or stanza; and lastly with equal labour, the greater because unbetrayed, by the variation and various harmonies of their metrical movement. Their measures, however, were not indebted for their variety to the introduction of new metres, such as have been attempted of late in the Alonzo and Imogen,[5] and others borrowed from the German, having in their very mechanism a specific overpowering tune, to which the generous reader humours his voice and emphasis, with more indulgence to the author than attention to the meaning or quantity of the words; but which, to an ear familiar with the *numerous* sounds of the Greek and Roman poets, has an effect not unlike that of galloping over a paved road in a German stage-waggon without springs. On the contrary, the elder bards both of Italy and England produced a far greater as well as more charming variety by countless modifications, and subtle balances of sound in the common metres of their country. A lasting and enviable reputation awaits that man of genius, who should attempt and realize a union;—who

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[5] [Here is a stanza of this overpowering metre:—

A warriour so bold and a virgin so bright
Conversed as they sat on the green;
They gazed on each other with tender delight:
Alonzo the brave, was the name of the knight,
The maid's was the fair Imogene.

Mr. Southey adopted this metre for his popular ballad—Mary the Maid of the Inn. Poet. Works, 1838. vol. vi. p. 3. S. C.]

should recall the high finish, the appropriateness, the facility, the delicate proportion, and above all, the perfusive and omnipresent grace, which have preserved, as in a shrine of precious amber, the Sparrow of Catullus, the Swallow, the Grasshopper, and all the other little loves of Anacreon; and which, with bright, though diminished glories, revisited the youth and early manhood of Christian Europe, in the vales of[6]

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[6] These thoughts were suggested to me during the perusal of the Madrigals of Giovambatista Strozzi published in Florence in May 1593, by his sons Lorenzo and Filippo Strozzi, with a dedication to their paternal uncle, *Signor Leone Strozzi, Generale delle battaglie di Santa Chiesa.* As I do not remember to have seen either the poems or their author mentioned in any English work, or to have found them in any of the common collections of Italian poetry;* and as the little work is of rare occurrence; I will transcribe a few specimens. I have seldom met with compositions that possessed, to my feelings, more of that satisfying entireness, that complete adequateness of the manner to the matter which so charms us in Anacreon, joined with the tenderness, and more than the delicacy of Catullus. Trifles as they are, they were probably elaborated with great care; yet in the perusal we refer them to a spontaneous energy rather than to voluntary effort. To a cultivated taste there is a delight in perfection for its own sake, independently of the material in which it is manifested, that none but a cultivated taste can understand or appreciate.

After what I have advanced, it would appear presumption to offer a translation; even if the attempt were not discouraged by the different genius of the English mind and language, which demands a denser body of thought as the condition of a high polish, than the Italian. I cannot but deem it likewise an advantage in the Italian tongue, in many other respects inferiour to our own, that the language of poetry is more distinct from that of prose than with us. From the earlier appearance and established primacy of the Tuscan poets, concurring with

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* [Gamba, p. 393, calls this edition *rara edizione.* Ed.]

Arno, and the groves of Isis and of Cam;—and who

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the number of independent states, and the diversity of written dialects, the Italians have gained a poetic idiom, as the Greeks before them had obtained from the same causes, with greater and more various discriminations, for example, the Ionic for their heroic verses; the Attic for their iambic; and the two modes of the Doric for the lyric or sacerdotal, and the pastoral, the distinctions of which were doubtless more obvious to the Greeks themselves than they are to us.

I will venture to add one other observation before I proceed to the transcription. I am aware that the sentiments which I have avowed concerning the points of difference between the poetry of the present age, and that of the period between 1500 and 1650, are the reverse of the opinion commonly entertained. I was conversing on this subject with a friend, when the servant, a worthy and sensible woman, coming in, I placed before her two engravings, the one a pinky-coloured plate of the day, the other a masterly etching by Salvator Rosa from one of his own pictures. On pressing her to tell us, which she preferred, after a little blushing and flutter of feeling, she replied—"Why, that, Sir, to be sure! (pointing to the *ware* from the Fleet-street print shops);—it's so *neat* and elegant. T'other is such a *scratchy* slovenly thing." An artist, whose writings are scarcely less valuable than his pictures, and to whose authority more deference will be willingly paid, than I could even wish should be shewn to mine, has told us, and from his own experience too, that good taste must be acquired, and like all other good things, is the result of thought and the submissive study of the best models.† If it be asked, "But what shall I deem such?"—the answer is; presume those to be the best, the reputation of

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† ["On whom then can he rely, or who shall show him the path that leads to excellence? The answer is obvious. Those great masters who have travelled the same road with success are the most likely to conduct others. The works of those who have stood the test of ages have a claim to that respect and veneration to which no modern can pretend. The duration and stability of their fame is sufficient to evince that it has not been suspended upon the slender thread of fashion and caprice, but bound to the human heart by every tie of sympathetic admiration." Reynolds. *Discourse* ii. Ed.]

with these should combine the keener interest, deeper

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which has been matured into fame by the consent of ages. For wisdom always has a final majority, if not by conviction, yet by acquiescence. In addition to Sir J. Reynolds I may mention Harris of Salisbury; who in one of his philosophical disquisitions has written on the means of acquiring a just taste with the precision of Aristotle, and the elegance of Quinctilian.‡

*MADRIGALI.*

*Gelido suo ruscel chiaro, e tranquillo*
*M'insegnó Amor di state a mezzo'l giorno;*
*Ardean le selve, ardean le piagge, e i colli.*
*Ond 'io, ch' al piu gran gielo ardo e sfavillo,*
*Subito corsi; ma si puro adorno*
*Girsene il vidi, che turbar no'l volli:*
*Sol mi specchiava, e'n dolce ombrosa sponda*
*Mi stava intento al mormorar dell' onda.*

*Aure*

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‡ [See Philological Inquiries: Part ii. chap. xii. especially the concluding paragraphs. This Treatise is contained in vol. ii. of the collective edition of the works of Harris,—by his son the Earl of Malmesbury, in two vols. 4to. London, 1801.

James Harris, the author of those volumes, was born in the Close of Salisbury, July 29, 1709—died Dec. 22, 1780. He is best known as the author of Hermes, a work on Universal Grammar; which, according to Bishop Lowth, presents "the most beautiful example of analysis that has been exhibited since the days of Aristotle:" and three Treatises concerning Art,—Music, Painting and Poetry, and Happiness,—which imitate the method of Plato, and are written with admirable distinctness. Harris was not given up wholly to literary pursuits, and domestic and social amusements, though possessed of high qualifications for both the one and the other: he also took a part in public life, held the office first of a Lord of the Admiralty, then for about two years of a Lord of the Treasury. In 1774 he became Secretary and Comptroller to the Queen. He represented the Borough of Christ Church till the day of his death, was assiduous in the discharge of his parliamentary duty and occasionally took a share in debates. See Memoirs of the Author by his Son, prefixed to his works. S. C.]

pathos, manlier reflection, and the fresher and more

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*Aure dell' angosciosa viver mio*
*Refrigerio soave,*
*E dolce sì, che più non mi par grave*
*Ne'l arder, ne'l morir, anz' il desio;*
*Deh voi'l ghiaccio, e le nubi, e'l tempo rio*
*Discacciatene omai, che l'onda chiara,*
*E l' ombra non men cara*
*A scherzare, e cantar per suoi boschetti,*
*E prati festa et allegrezza alletti.*

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*Pacifiche, ma spesso in amorosa*
*Guerra co'fiori, e l' erba*
*Alla stagione acerba*
*Verdi insegne del giglio e della rosa,*
*Movete, Aure, pian pian; che tregua ò posa,*
*Se non pace, io ritrove;*
*E so ben dove:—Oh vago, e mansueto*
*Sguardo, oh labbra d'ambrosia, oh rider lieto!*

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*Hor come un scoglio stassi,*
*Hor come un rio se'n fugge,*
*Ed hor crud' orsa rugge,*
*Hor canta angelo pio: ma che non fassi?*
*E che non fammi, O sassi,*
*O rivi, o belue, o Dii, questa mia vaga*
*Non so, se ninfa, ò maga,*
*Non so, se donna, ò Dea,*
*Non so, se dolce ò rea?*

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*Piangendo mi baciaste,*
*E ridendo il negaste:*
*In doglia hebbivi pia,*
*In festa hebbivi ria:*
*Nacque gioia di pianti,*
*Dolor di riso: O amanti*
*Miseri, habbiate insieme*
*Ognor paura e speme.*

*Bel*

various imagery, which give a value and a name that

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*Bel Fior, tu mi rimembri*
*La rugiadosa guancia del bel viso;*
*E si vera l'assembri,*
*Che'n te sovente, come in lei m'affiso:*
*Et hor del vago riso,*
*Hor del sereno sguardo*
*Io pur cieco riguardo. Ma qual fugge,*
*O Rosa, il mattin lieve?*
*E chi te, come neve,*
*E'l mio cor teco, e la mia vita strugge?*

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*Anna* mia, Anna dolce, oh sempre nuovo*
*E piu chiaro concento,*
*Quanta dolcezza sento*
*In sol Anna dicendo? Io mi pur pruovo,*
*Ne quì tra noi ritruovo,*
*Ne trà cieli armonia,*
*Che del bel nome suo più dolce sia:*
*Altro il Cielo, altro Amore,*
*Altro non suona l'Ecco del mio core.*

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*Hor che'l prato, e la selva si scolora,*
*Al tuo sereno ombroso*
*Muovine, alto Riposo,*
*Deh ch 'io riposi una sol notte, un hora:*
*Han le fere, e gli augelli, ognun talora*
*Ha qualche pace; io quando,*
*Lassò! non vonne errando,*
*E non piango, e non grido? e qual pur forte?*
*Ma poichè, non sent' egli, odine, Morte.*

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*Risi e piansi d'Amor; nè però mai*
*Se non in fiamma, ò 'n onda, ò 'n vento scrissi:*
*Spesso mercè trovai*
*Crudel*

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* [Filli in Strozzi's Madrigal. S. C.]

will not pass away to the poets who have done honour to our own times, and to those of our immediate predecessors.[7]

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*Crudel; sempre in me morto, in altri vissi:*
*Hor da' più scuri Abissi al ciel m'alzai,*
*Hor ne pur caddi giuso;*
*Stanco al fin quì son chiuso.*

[7] [The union of "high finish and perfusive grace with pathos and manly reflection"—pathos recalling the peculiar tone of Southey with a Wordsworthian strength of thought and stateliness of sentiment—is exemplified, as it seems to me, in the poetry of Mr. H. Taylor, (not to speak of its other merits of a different kind) especially his later poetry, and very exquisitely in his printed but unpublished Lines written in remembrance of E. E. Villiers. A friend pointed out to me, what I had before been *feeling*, the fine interwoven harmony of the stanza in this poem, which, though long and varied, forms a whole to the ear as truly as the more formal Spenserian stanza, but has a soft, flowing movement remarkably well fitted for the expression of thoughtful tenderness, and well illustrates Mr. Wordsworth's remark, recorded in this work, on the musical "sweep of whole paragraphs." It is easy enough to invent new metres, but some new metres which the world has lately been presented with will never live, I fear, to be old. They are as unmusical and not so spirited as a Chicasaw war-song.—There is a witch in Mr. Tennyson's poetry, but I do not imagine that any great part of her witching power resides in newness of metre—though perhaps it is rash even to hazard a conjecture on the properties of such a subtle enchantress, or to say how such a mysterious siren does or does not bewitch. S. C.]

## CHAPTER IV.

*Examination of the tenets peculiar to Mr. Wordsworth—Rustic life (above all, low and rustic life) especially unfavourable to the formation of a human diction—The best parts of language the product of philosophers, not of clowns or shepherds—Poetry essentially ideal and generic—The language of Milton as much the language of real life, yea, incomparably more so than that of the cottager.*

S far then as Mr. Wordsworth in his preface contended, and most ably contended, for a reformation in our poetic diction, as far as he has evinced the truth of passion, and the dramatic propriety of those figures and metaphors in the original poets, which, stripped of their justifying reasons, and converted into mere artifices of connection or ornament, constitute the characteristic falsity in the poetic style of the moderns; and as far as he has, with equal acuteness and clearness, pointed out the process by which this change was effected, and the resemblances between that state into which the reader's mind is thrown by the pleasurable confusion of thought from an unaccustomed train of words and images; and that state which is induced by the natural language of impassioned feeling; he undertook a useful task, and deserves all praise, both for the attempt and for the execution. The provocations to this remonstrance in behalf of truth and nature were still of perpetual recurrence before and after the

publication of this preface. I cannot likewise but add, that the comparison of such poems of merit, as have been given to the public within the last ten or twelve years, with the majority of those produced previously to the appearance of that preface, leave no doubt on my mind, that Mr. Wordsworth is fully justified in believing his efforts to have been by no means ineffectual. Not only in the verses of those who have professed their admiration of his genius, but even of those who have distinguished themselves by hostility to his theory, and depreciation of his writings, are the impressions of his principles plainly visible. It is possible, that with these principles others may have been blended, which are not equally evident; and some which are unsteady and subvertible from the narrowness or imperfection of their basis. But it is more than possible, that these errors of defect or exaggeration, by kindling and feeding the controversy, may have conduced not only to the wider propagation of the accompanying truths, but that, by their frequent presentation to the mind in an excited state, they may have won for them a more permanent and practical result. A man will borrow a part from his opponent the more easily, if he feels himself justified in continuing to reject a part. While there remain important points in which he can still feel himself in the right, in which he still finds firm footing for continued resistance, he will gradually adopt those opinions, which were the least remote from his own convictions, as not less congruous with his own theory than with that which he reprobates. In like manner with a kind of instinctive prudence, he will abandon by little and little his weakest posts, till at length he seems to forget that they had ever belonged to him, or affects to consider them at most as accidental and "petty annex-

ments," the removal of which leaves the citadel unhurt and unendangered.

My own differences from certain supposed parts of Mr. Wordsworth's theory ground themselves on the assumption, that his words had been rightly interpreted, as purporting that the proper diction for poetry in general consists altogether in a language taken, with due exceptions, from the mouths of men in real life, a language which actually constitutes the natural conversation of men under the influence of natural feelings. My objection is, first, that in any sense this rule is applicable only to certain classes of poetry; secondly, that even to these classes it is not applicable, except in such a sense, as hath never by any one (as far as I know or have read,) been denied or doubted; and lastly, that as far as, and in that degree in which it is practicable, it is yet as a rule useless, if not injurious, and therefore either need not, or ought not to be practised. The poet informs his reader, that he had generally chosen low and rustic life;[1] but not as low and rustic, or in order to repeat that pleasure of doubtful moral effect, which persons of elevated rank and of superiour refinement oftentimes derive from a happy imitation of the rude unpolished manners and discourse of their inferiours. For the pleasure so derived may be traced to three exciting causes. The first is the naturalness, in fact, of the things represented. The second is the apparent naturalness of the representation, as raised and qualified by an imperceptible infusion of the author's own knowledge and talent, which infusion does, indeed, constitute it an imitation as distinguished from a mere copy. The third cause may

[1] [In the last edition of this preface the word "humble" is substituted for "low." See P. W. II. p. 306. Ed.]

be found in the reader's conscious feeling of his superiority awakened by the contrast presented to him; even as for the same purpose the kings and great barons of yore retained, sometimes actual clowns and fools, but more frequently shrewd and witty fellows in that character. These, however, were not Mr. Wordsworth's objects. *He* chose low and rustic life, "because in that condition the essential passions of the heart find a better soil, in which they can attain their maturity, are less under restraint, and speak a plainer and more emphatic language; because in that condition of life our elementary feelings coexist in a state of greater simplicity, and consequently may be more accurately contemplated, and more forcibly communicated; because the manners of rural life germinate from those elementary feelings; and from the necessary character of rural occupations are more easily comprehended, and are more durable; and lastly, because in that condition the passions of men are incorporated with the beautiful and permanent forms of nature."

Now it is clear to me, that in the most interesting of the poems, in which the author is more or less dramatic, as THE BROTHERS, MICHAEL, RUTH, THE MAD MOTHER, and others,[2] the persons introduced are by no means taken from low or rustic life in the common acceptation of those words; and it is not less clear, that the sentiments and language, as far as they can be conceived to have been really transferred from

[2] [The Brothers: P. W. I. p. 109. Michael: *ib.* p. 222. The Mad Mother, now simply entitled "*Her eyes are wild:*" *ib.* p. 256, and Ruth II. p. 106. Ed. The Edition of Mr. Wordsworth's Poems, referred to by Mr. Coleridge in this critique, is that of 1815, in two vols. large 8vo. S. C.]

the minds and conversation of such persons, are attributable to causes and circumstances not necessarily connected with "their occupations and abode." The thoughts, feelings, language, and manners of the shepherd-farmers in the vales of Cumberland and Westmoreland, as far as they are actually adopted in those poems, may be accounted for from causes, which will and do produce the same results in every state of life, whether in town or country. As the two principal I rank that independence, which raises a man above servitude, or daily toil for the profit of others, yet not above the necessity of industry and a frugal simplicity of domestic life; and the accompanying unambitious, but solid and religious, education, which has rendered few books familiar, but the Bible, and the Liturgy or Hymn book. To this latter cause, indeed, which is so far accidental, that it is the blessing of particular countries and a particular age, not the product of particular places or employments, the poet owes the shew of probability, that his personages might really feel, think, and talk with any tolerable resemblance to his representation. It is an excellent remark of Dr. Henry More's, that "a man of confined education, but of good parts, by constant reading of the Bible will naturally form a more winning and commanding rhetoric than those that are learned; the intermixture of tongues and of artificial phrases debasing *their* style."[3]

[3] [*Enthusiasmus Triumphatus*, Sect. xxxv. "For a man illiterate, as he was,* but of good parts, by constant reading of the Bible will naturally contract a more winning and commanding Rhetorick than those that are learned, the intermixture of tongues and of artificial phrases deforming their style, and making it

* [This is spoken of the enthusiast, David George, who was born at Delph; died 1556. S. C.]

It is, moreover, to be considered that to the formation of healthy feelings, and a reflecting mind, negations involve impediments not less formidable than sophistication and vicious intermixture. I am convinced, that for the human soul to prosper in rustic life a certain vantage-ground is pre-requisite. It is not every man that is likely to be improved by a country life or by country labours. Education, or original sensibility, or both, must pre-exist, if the changes, forms, and incidents of nature are to prove a sufficient stimulant. And where these are not sufficient, the mind contracts and hardens by want of stimulants; and the man becomes selfish, sensual, gross, and hard-hearted. Let the management of the Poor Laws in Liverpool, Manchester, or Bristol be compared with the ordinary dispensation of the poor rates in agricultural villages, where the farmers are the overseers and

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sound more after the manner of men, though ordinarily there may be more of God in it than in that of the enthusiast." p. 34, Ed. London, 1656. Dr. Henry More, the friend and colleague of Cudworth was born in 1614, died 1687. He was educated in Christ College, Cambridge, in which University he spent his life. His theological works,—the chief of which are The Mystery of Godliness and A Modest Inquiry into the Mystery of Iniquity, a detailed argument against the Church of Rome,—fill one large folio volume, and his philosophical writings are numerous. He studied Plotinus and, rejecting the doctrines of Aristotle and the scholastics, sought the principles of divine philosophy in the writings of the Platonists. Their teaching and that of the ancient Cabbalists he traced to the same source, the Hebrew Prophets, whose doctrines he believed to have been transmitted to Pythagoras and from him to Plato. Though an opponent of mystics and enthusiasts, his own mind had a strong tendency to mysticism; he was profoundly learned and of a most contemplative spirit. Cousin says that in combating the errors of Des Cartes and Spinoza he shewed great respect for the genius of these two philosophers. S. C.]

guardians of the poor. If my own experience have not been particularly unfortunate, as well as that of the many respectable country clergymen with whom I have conversed on the subject, the result would engender more than scepticism concerning the desirable influences of low and rustic life in and for itself. Whatever may be concluded on the other side, from the stronger local attachments and enterprising spirit of the Swiss, and other mountaineers, applies to a particular mode of pàstoral life, under forms of property that permit and beget manners truly republican, not to rustic life in general, or to the absence of artificial cultivation. On the contrary the mountaineers, whose manners have been so often eulogized, are in general better educated and greater readers than men of equal rank elsewhere. But where this is not the case, as among the peasantry of North Wales, the ancient mountains, with all their terrors and all their glories, are pictures to the blind, and music to the deaf.

I should not have entered so much into detail upon this passage, but here seems to be the point, to which all the lines of difference converge as to their source and centre;—I mean, as far as, and in whatever respect, my poetic creed *does* differ from the doctrines promulgated in this preface. I adopt with full faith, the principle of Aristotle, that poetry, as poetry, is essentially[4] ideal,[5] that it avoids and excludes all accident;

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[4] [Mr. Coleridge here quoted, in a foot note, from the first edition of The Friend the passage "Say not that I am recommending abstractions," to the end of the paragraph, which occurs in the Second of the Letters from Germany, placed near the end of this volume.]

[5] [See Poetic. s. 18. Φανερὸν δὲ ἐκ τῶν εἰρημένων, καὶ ὅτι οὐ τὸ τὰ γενόμενα λέγειν, τοῦτο ποιητοῦ ἔργον ἐστὶν, ἀλλ' οἷα ἂν γένοιτο, καὶ τὰ δυναρὰ κατὰ τὸ εἰκὸς, ἢ τὸ ἀναγ-

that its apparent individualities of rank, character, or occupation must be representative of a class; and that the persons of poetry must be clothed with generic attributes, with the common attributes of the class; not with such as one gifted individual might possibly possess, but such as from his situation it is most probable before-hand that he would possess.[6] If my

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καῖον. * * * Διὸ καὶ φιλοσοφώτερον καὶ σπουδαιότερον ποίησις ἱστορίας ἐστίν. Ἡ μὲν γὰρ ποίησις μᾶλλον τὰ καθόλου, ἡ δ' ἱστορία τὰ καθ' ἕκαστον λέγει. Ἔστι δὲ καθόλου μὲν, τῷ ποίῳ τὰ ποῖ' ἄττα συμβαίνει λέγειν, ἢ πράττειν, κατὰ τὸ εἰκὸς, ἢ τὸ ἀναγκαῖον, οὗ στοχάζεται ἡ ποίησις, ονόματα ἐπιτιθεμένη· τὰ δὲ καθ' ἕκαστον, τί Ἀλκιβιάδης ἔπραξεν, ἢ τί ἔπαθεν. Ed.

*It appears from what has been said, that the object of the poet is not to relate what has actually happened, but what may possibly happen, either with probability or from necessity.* The difference between the poet and the historian does not arise from one writing in verse and the other in prose; for if the work of Herodotus were put into verse, it would be no less a history than it is in prose. But they differ in this, that one relates what has actually been done, the other what may be done. Poetry, therefore, is more philosophical and instructive than history. *Poetry speaks more of general things, and history of particular. By general things I mean what any person of such a character would probably and naturally say or do in such a situation; and this is what poetry aims at even in giving names to the characters. By particular things I mean what any individual, as Alcibiades, for instance, either acted or suffered in reality.* Pye's Translation. S. C.]

[6] ["It is Shakespeare's peculiar excellence, that throughout the whole of his splendid picture gallery—(the reader will excuse the acknowledged inadequacy of this metaphor)—we find individuality everywhere, mere portrait nowhere. In all his various characters we still feel ourselves communing with the same nature, which is everywhere present as the vegetable sap in the branches, sprays, leaves, buds, blossoms, and fruits, their shapes, tastes, and odours. Speaking of the effect, that is, his works themselves, we may define the excellence of their

premises are right and my deductions legitimate, it follows that there can be no poetic medium between the swains of Theocritus and those of an imaginary golden age.

The characters of the vicar and the shepherd-mariner in the poem of THE BROTHERS,[7] and that of the shepherd of Green-head Ghyll in the MICHAEL,[8] have all the verisimilitude and representative quality, that the purposes of poetry can require. They are persons of a known and abiding class, and their manners and sentiments the natural product of circumstances common to the class. Take Michael for instance:

> An old man stout of heart, and strong of limb.
> His bodily frame had been from youth to age
> Of an unusual strength: his mind was keen,
> Intense, and frugal, apt for all affairs,
> And in his shepherd's calling he was prompt
> And watchful more than ordinary men.
> Hence he had learned the meaning of all winds,
> Of blasts of every tone; and oftentimes
> When others heeded not, He heard the South
> Make subterraneous music, like the noise
> Of bagpipers on distant Highland hills.
> The Shepherd, at such warning, of his flock
> Bethought him, and he to himself would say,
> 'The winds are now devising work for me!'
> And, truly, at all times, the storm, that drives
> The traveller to a shelter, summoned him
> Up to the mountains: he had been alone
> Amid the heart of many thousand mists,
> That came to him and left him on the heights.

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method as consisting in that just proportion, that union and interpenetration of the universal and the particular, which must ever pervade all works of decided and true science." The Friend, III. pp. 121-2. Ed.]

[7] [P. W. I. p. 109. Ed.]

[8] [Ib. p. 222. Ed.]

So lived he, till his eightieth year was past.
And grossly that man errs, who should suppose
That the green valleys, and the streams and rocks,
Were things indifferent to the Shepherd's thoughts.
Fields, where with cheerful spirits he had breathed
The common air; the hills, which he so oft
Had climbed with vigorous steps;[8] which had impressed
So many incidents upon his mind
Of hardship, skill or courage, joy or fear;
Which, like a book, preserved the memory
Of the dumb animals, whom he had saved,
Had fed or sheltered, linking to such acts,
So grateful in themselves, the certainty
Of honourable gain; these fields, these hills
Which were his living Being, even more
Than his own blood—what could they less? had laid
Strong hold on his affections,[9] were to him
A pleasurable feeling of blind love,
The pleasure which there is in life itself.

On the other hand, in the poems which are pitched in a lower key, as the HARRY GILL,[10] and THE IDIOT BOY,[11] the feelings are those of human nature in general; though the poet has judiciously laid the scene in the country, in order to place himself in the vicinity of interesting images, without the necessity of ascribing a sentimental perception of their beauty to the persons of his drama. In THE IDIOT BOY, indeed, the mother's character is not so much the real and native product of a "situation where the essential passions

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[8] ["——— hills, which with vigorous step
He had so often climbed."—Last edition. Ed.]

[9] ["——— linking to such acts
The certainty of honourable gain;
Those fields, those hills—what could they less? had laid
Strong hold on his affections."—Last edition. Ed.]

[10] [P. W. II. p. 135. Ed.]

[11] [Ib. I. p. 203. Ed.]

of the heart find a better soil, in which they can attain their maturity and speak a plainer and more emphatic language," as it is an impersonation of an instinct abandoned by judgment. Hence the two following charges seem to me not wholly groundless: at least, they are the only plausible objections, which I have heard to that fine poem. The one is, that the author has not, in the poem itself, taken sufficient care to preclude from the reader's fancy the disgusting images of ordinary morbid idiocy, which yet it was by no means his intention to represent. He has even by the "burr, burr, burr," uncounteracted by any preceding description of the boy's beauty, assisted in recalling them. The other is, that the idiocy of the boy is so evenly balanced by the folly of the mother, as to present to the general reader rather a laughable burlesque on the blindness of anile dotage, than an analytic display of maternal affection in its ordinary workings.

In THE THORN,[12] the poet himself acknowledges in a note the necessity of an introductory poem, in which he should have portrayed the character of the person from whom the words of the poem are supposed to proceed: a superstitious man moderately imaginative, of slow faculties and deep feelings, "a captain of a small trading vessel, for example, who, being past the middle age of life, had retired upon an annuity, or small independent income, to some village or country town of which he was not a native, or in which he had not been accustomed to live. Such men having nothing to do become credulous and talkative from indolence." But in a poem, still more in a lyric poem—

[12] [Ib. II. p. 124. The note to which Mr. Coleridge refers is omitted in the last editions. Ed.]

and the Nurse in ROMEO AND JULIET alone prevents me from extending the remark even to dramatic poetry, if indeed even the Nurse can be deemed altogether a case in point—it is not possible to imitate truly a dull and garrulous discourser, without repeating the effects of dulness and garrulity. However this may be, I dare assert, that the parts—(and these form the far larger portion of the whole)—which might as well or still better have proceeded from the poet's own imagination, and have been spoken in his own character, are those which have given, and which will continue to give, universal delight; and that the passages exclusively appropriate to the supposed narrator, such as the last couplet of the third stanza;[13] the seven last lines of the tenth;[14] and the five following stanzas, with the exception of the four admirable lines at the commencement of the fourteenth, are felt by many unprejudiced and unsophisticated hearts, as sudden and unpleasant sinkings from the height to which the poet had previously lifted them, and to which he again re-elevates both himself and his reader.

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[13] * "I've measured it from side to side;
'Tis three feet long, and two feet wide."

[14] † "Nay, rack your brain—'tis all in vain,
I'll tell you every thing I know;
But to the Thorn, and to the Pond
Which is a little step beyond,

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* [These two lines are left out in the latter editions. So are the two stanzas (originally the 11th and 12th) cited in the next note, and some parts of the present 12th, 13th, and 14th, are altered from what they were as quoted by Mr. C. S. C.]

† [Preface. P. W. II. p. 307. S. C.]

If then I am compelled to doubt the theory, by which the choice of characters was to be directed, not only *a priori*, from grounds of reason, but both from the few instances in which the poet himself need be supposed to have been governed by it, and from the comparative inferiority of those instances; still more must I hesitate in my assent to the sentence which immediately follows the former citation; and which I can neither admit as particular fact, nor as general

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I wish that you would go:
Perhaps, when you are at the place,
You something of her tale may trace.

I'll give you the best help I can:
Before you up the mountain go,
Up to the dreary mountain-top,
I'll tell you all I know.
'Tis now some two-and-twenty years
Since she (her name is Martha Ray)
Gave, with a maiden's true good will,
Her company to Stephen Hill;
And she was blithe and gay,
And she was happy, happy still
Whene'er she thought of Stephen Hill.

And they had fixed the wedding-day,
The morning that must wed them both;
But Stephen to another maid
Had sworn another oath;
And, with this other maid, to church
Unthinking Stephen went—
Poor Martha! on that woful day
A pang of pitiless dismay
Into her soul was sent;
A fire was kindled in her breast,
Which might not burn itself to rest.

They say, full six months after this,
While yet the summer leaves were green,
She to the mountain-top would go,

rule. "The language, too, of these men has been adopted (purified indeed from what appear to be its real defects, from all lasting and rational causes of dislike or disgust) because such men hourly communicate with the best objects from which the best part of language is originally derived; and because, from their rank in society and the sameness and narrow circle of their intercouse, being less under the action of social

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And there was often seen.
'Tis said, a child was in her womb,
As now to any eye was plain;
She was with child, and she was mad;
Yet often she was sober sad
From her exceeding pain.
Oh me! ten thousand times I'd rather
That he had died, that cruel father!

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Last Christmas when they talked of this,
Old Farmer Simpson did maintain,
That in her womb the infant wrought
About its mother's heart, and brought
Her senses back again:
And, when at last her time drew near,
Her looks were calm, her senses clear.

No more I know, I wish I did,
And I would tell it all to you;
For what became of this poor child
There's none that ever knew:
And if a child was born or no,
There's no one that could ever tell;
And if 'twas born alive or dead,
There's no one knows, as I have said:
But some remember well,
That Martha Ray about this time
Would up the mountain often climb."

vanity, they convey their feelings and notions in simple and unelaborated expressions.[15]" To this I reply; that a rustic's language, purified from all provincialism and grossness, and so far re-constructed as to be made consistent with the rules of grammar—(which are in essence no other than the laws of universal logic, applied to psychological materials)—will not differ from the language of any other man of common sense, however learned or refined he may be, except as far as the notions, which the rustic has to convey, are fewer and more indiscriminate. This will become still clearer, if we add the consideration—(equally important though less obvious)—that the rustic, from the more imperfect development of his faculties, and from the lower state of their cultivation, aims almost solely to convey insulated facts, either those of his scanty experience or his traditional belief; while the educated man chiefly seeks to discover and express those connections of things, or those relative bearings of fact to fact, from which some more or less general law is deducible. For facts are valuable to a wise man, chiefly as they lead to the discovery of the indwelling law, which is the true being of things, the sole solution of their modes of existence, and in the knowledge of which consists our dignity and our power.

As little can I agree with the assertion, that from the objects with which the rustic hourly communicates the best part of language is formed. For first, if to communicate with an object implies such an acquaintance with it, as renders it capable of being discriminately reflected on, the distinct knowledge of an uneducated rustic would furnish a very scanty vocabulary.

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[15] [Preface. P. W. II. p. 307. S. C.]

The few things and modes of action requisite for his bodily conveniences would alone be individualized; while all the rest of nature would be expressed by a small number of confused general terms. Secondly, I deny that the words and combinations of words derived from the objects, with which the rustic is familiar, whether with distinct or confused knowledge, can be justly said to form the best part of language. It is more than probable, that many classes of the brute creation possess discriminating sounds, by which they can convey to each other notices of such objects as concern their food, shelter, or safety. Yet we hesitate to call the aggregate of such sounds a language, otherwise than metaphorically. The best part of human language, properly so called, is derived from reflection on the acts of the mind itself. It is formed by a voluntary appropriation of fixed symbols to internal acts, to processes and results of imagination, the greater part of which have no place in the consciousness of uneducated man; though in civilized society, by imitation and passive remembrance of what they hear from their religious instructors and other superiours, the most uneducated share in the harvest which they neither sowed, nor reaped. If the history of the phrases in hourly currency among our peasants were traced, a person not previously aware of the fact would be surprised at finding so large a number, which three or four centuries ago were the exclusive property of the universities and the schools; and, at the commencement of the Reformation, had been transferred from the school to the pulpit, and thus gradually passed into common life. The extreme difficulty, and often the impossibility, of finding words for the simplest moral and intellectual processes in the languages of uncivilized tribes has proved perhaps the weightiest

obstacle to the progress of our most zealous and adroit missionaries. Yet these tribes are surrounded by the same nature as our peasants are; but in still more impressive forms; and they are, moreover, obliged to particularize many more of them. When, therefore, Mr. Wordsworth adds, "accordingly, such a language"—(meaning, as before, the language of rustic life purified from provincialism)—"arising out of repeated experience and regular feelings, is a more permanent, and a far more philosophical language, than that which is frequently substituted for it by Poets, who think that they are conferring honour upon themselves and their art in proportion as they indulge in arbitrary and capricious habits of expression;"[16] it may be answered, that the language, which he has in view, can be attributed to rustics with no greater right, than the style of Hooker or Bacon to Tom Brown[17]

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[16] [Ib.—"In proportion as they separate themselves from the sympathies of men, and indulge in arbitrary and capricious habits of expression, in order to furnish food for fickle tastes, and fickle appetites, of their own creation." S. C.]

[17] [Thomas Brown, the son of a farmer in Shropshire, lived towards the close of the 17th century, died in 1704. His works in prose and verse, with his remains, were printed in 4 vols. 12mo., in 1707. There was a 9th edition in 1730. "His poems," says Dr. Drake, in his 'Character of the author,' "are most of them imitations of antiquity, and so called by him, but generally so improved under his hands, they may justly be esteemed originals. They were generally Odes, Satires, or Epigrams, Paraphrases, Imitations of Horace and Martial."

His prose works consist of Letters from the Dead to the Living, &c., after the manner of Lucian, Dialogues, Essays, Declamations, Satires, Letters, and other miscellaneous productions, being Amusements Serious and Comical, calculated for the Meridian of London. I would fain believe, to speak from a mere glance into these volumes, that the Meridian of London is improved since Mr. Brown's days: and am sorry to

or Sir Roger L'Estrange.[18] Doubtless, if what is peculiar to each were omitted in each, the result must needs be the same. Further, that the poet, who uses an illogical diction, or a style fitted to excite only the low and changeable pleasure of wonder by means of groundless novelty, substitutes a language of

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learn that this "vulgar writer's" works are not likely just yet to visit

"The waters of Oblivion's lake."

The author appears to have possessed, besides an acquaintance with French, Italian, and Spanish, some classic lore, and to have employed it in working up the alloy and baser portions of ancient wit into modern shapes. "And if he was not so nice in the choice of his authors," says Dr. Drake, "as might be expected from a man of his taste, he must be excused; because, doing those things for his subsistence, he did not consult his own liking so much as his booksellers', taking such as they offered the best price for." Poor man! he had better have tried to dig, and ought to have been less ashamed to beg, than to follow in the track of those who, though they do not call evil good, yet stimulate under pretence of satirizing it. His eulogist and defender adds, "Nor can he be blam'd for this, since fortune having provided no other way for him to live by, prudence directed him to prefer the drudgery of most gain, before a more specious one of applause, and taught him not to barter his ease and profit for the reputation of being nice." What lax notions must have been generally tolerated in times when a grave man could write such a sentence as this in sober earnest, weighing money gains against reputation for delicacy, and leaving morals out of the question! It would seem as if Charles Lamb's remark On the Artificial Comedy of the last Century must be applied to a great deal of our literature beside comedy, both in that century and the preceding one: that it is out of the moral world altogether, to be judged by no laws but those of a land where laws of *conscience* are unrecognized—a Utopian place, where "pleasure is duty, and the manners perfect freedom." S. C.]

[18] [Sir Roger L'Estrange, of an ancient family in Norfolk, is another "eminent writer in the 17th century," who emi-

folly and vanity, not for that of the rustic, but for that of good sense and natural feeling.

Here let me be permitted to remind the reader, that the positions, which I controvert, are contained in the sentences—"a selection of the real language of men;"[19]—"the language of these men" (that is, men

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nently displays the worse characteristics of that period of our literature. He lived from about 1617 to December 12, 1705; was a royalist; contrived to keep in with Cromwell, but was in trouble, as a disaffected person, under King William. He wrote a great many tracts for those times, but as an author is at present best known by The Alliances of Divine Offices, exhibiting all the Liturgies of the Church of England since the Reformation, 1699, folio—The Reign of Charles I. 1654—History of the Times 1687, and a tract against Milton, entitled No Blind Guides.

His writings have been characterized with great severity by Mr. Thomas Gordon, who declares them "not fit to be read by any who have taste and breeding"—"full of technical terms, of phrases picked up in the streets from apprentices and porters." "His sentences," says the critic, "beside their grossness, are lively nothings, which can never be translated." After giving a specimen, "Yet this man," he adds, "was reckoned a master, nay, a reformer of the English language; a man who writ no language, nor does it appear that he understood any; witness his miserable translations of *Cicero's Offices* and *Josephus*.—Sir Roger had a genius for buffoonery and a rabble, and higher he never went.—To put his books into the hands of youth or boys, for whom Æsop, by him burlesqued, was designed, is to vitiate their taste, and to give them a poor low turn of thinking: not to mention the vile and slavish principles of the man. He has not only turned Æsop's plain beasts from the simplicity of nature into jesters and buffoons, but out of the mouths of animals inured to the boundless freedom of air and deserts, has drawn doctrines of servitude and a defence of tyranny." (Quoted from the General Dictionary, Historical and Critical, vol. vii.) S. C.]

[19] ["A selection of language really used by men," in the later editions. S. C.]

in low and rustic life) "has been adopted; I have proposed to myself to imitate, and, as far as is possible, to adopt the very language of men."

"Between the language of prose and that of metrical composition, there neither is, nor can be, any *essential difference:*" it is against these exclusively that my opposition is directed.

I object, in the very first instance, to an equivocation in the use of the word "real." Every man's language varies, according to the extent of his knowledge, the activity of his faculties, and the depth or quickness of his feelings. Every man's language has, first, its individualities; secondly, the common properties of the class to which he belongs; and thirdly, words and phrases of universal use. The language of Hooker, Bacon, Bishop Taylor, and Burke differs from the common language of the learned class only by the superiour number and novelty of the thoughts and relations which they had to convey. The language of Algernon Sidney differs not at all from that, which every well educated gentleman would wish to write, and (with due allowances for the undeliberateness, and less connected train, of thinking natural and proper to conversation) such as he would wish to talk. Neither one nor the other differ half as much from the general language of cultivated society, as the language of Mr. Wordsworth's homeliest composition differs from that of a common peasant. For "real" therefore, we must substitute ordinary, or *lingua communis.* And this, we have proved, is no more to be found in the phraseology of low and rustic life than in that of any other class. Omit the peculiarities of each and the result of course must be common to all. And assuredly the omissions and changes to be made in the language of rustics, before it could be trans-

ferred to any species of poem, except the drama or other professed imitation, are at least as numerous and weighty, as would be required in adapting to the same purpose the ordinary language of tradesmen and manufacturers. Not to mention, that the language so highly extolled by Mr. Wordsworth varies in every county, nay in every village, according to the accidental character of the clergyman, the existence or non-existence of schools; or even, perhaps, as the exciseman, publican, and barber happen to be, or not to be, zealous politicians, and readers of the weekly newspaper *pro bono publico*. Anteriour to cultivation the *lingua communis* of every country, as Dante has well observed, exists every where in parts, and no where as a whole.

Neither is the case rendered at all more tenable by the addition of the words, "in a state of excitement." For the nature of a man's words, when he is strongly affected by joy, grief, or anger, must necessarily depend on the number and quality of the general truths, conceptions and images, and of the words expressing them, with which his mind had been previously stored. For the property of passion is not to create; but to set in increased activity. At least, whatever new connections of thoughts or images, or—(which is equally, if not more than equally, the appropriate effect of strong excitement)—whatever generalizations of truth or experience the heat of passion may produce; yet the terms of their conveyance must have pre-existed in his former conversations, and are only collected and crowded together by the unusual stimulation. It is indeed very possible to adopt in a poem the unmeaning repetitions, habitual phrases, and other blank counters, which an unfurnished or confused understanding interposes at short intervals, in order to keep hold of

his subject, which is still slipping from him, and to give him time for recollection; or, in mere aid of vacancy, as in the scanty companies of a country stage the same player pops backwards and forwards, in order to prevent the appearance of empty spaces, in the procession of Macbeth, or Henry VIII. But what assistance to the poet, or ornament to the poem, these can supply, I am at a loss to conjecture. Nothing assuredly can differ either in origin or in mode more widely from the apparent tautologies of intense and turbulent feeling, in which the passion is greater and of longer endurance than to be exhausted or satisfied by a single representation of the image or incident exciting it. Such repetitions I admit to be a beauty of the highest kind; as illustrated by Mr. Wordsworth himself from the song of Deborah. *At her feet he bowed, he fell, he lay down: at her feet he bowed, he fell: where he bowed, there he fell down dead.* Judges v. 27.

## CHAPTER V.

*Language of metrical composition, why and wherein essentially different from that of prose—Origin and elements of metre—Its necessary consequences, and the conditions thereby imposed on the metrical writer in the choice of his diction.*

I CONCLUDE, therefore, that the attempt is impracticable; and that, were it not impracticable, it would still be useless. For the very power of making the selection implies the previous possession of the language selected. Or where can the poet have lived? And by what rules could he direct his choice, which would not have enabled him to select and arrange his words by the light of his own judgment? We do not adopt the language of a class by the mere adoption of such words exclusively, as that class would use, or at least understand; but likewise by following the order, in which the words of such men are wont to succeed each other. Now this order, in the intercourse of uneducated men, is distinguished from the diction of their superiours in knowledge and power, by the greater disjunction and separation in the component parts of that, whatever it be, which they wish to communicate. There is a want of that prospectiveness of mind, that surview, which enables a man to foresee the whole of what he is to convey, appertaining to any one point; and by this means so to subordinate and arrange the different parts according to their relative importance, as to convey it at once, and as an organized whole.

Now I will take the first stanza, on which I have chanced to open, in the Lyrical Ballads. It is one the most simple and the least peculiar in its language.

> "In distant countries have I been,
> And yet I have not often seen
> A healthy man, a man full grown,
> Weep in the public roads, alone.
> But such a one, on English ground,
> And in the broad highway, I met;
> Along the broad highway he came,
> His cheeks with tears were wet:
> Sturdy he seemed, though he was sad;
> And in his arms a lamb he had." [1]

The words here are doubtless such as are current in all ranks of life; and of course not less so in the hamlet and cottage than in the shop, manufactory, college, or palace. But is this the *order*, in which the rustic would have placed the words? I am grievously deceived, if the following less compact mode of commencing the same tale be not a far more faithful copy. "I have been in a many parts, far and near, and I don't know that I ever saw before a man crying by himself in the public road; a grown man I mean, that was neither sick nor hurt, &c. &c." But when I turn to the following stanza in The Thorn:

> "At all times of the day and night
> This wretched woman thither goes;
> And she is known to every star,
> And every wind that blows:
> And there, beside the Thorn, she sits,
> When the blue day-light's in the skies,
> And when the whirlwind's on the hill,
> Or frosty air is keen and still,

[1] [The Last of the Flock, 1st stanza. P. W. vol. i. p. 169. S. C.]

> And to herself she cries,
> Oh misery! Oh misery!
> Oh woe is me! Oh misery!"[2]

and compare this with the language of ordinary men, or with that which I can conceive at all likely to proceed, in real life, from such a narrator, as is supposed in the note to the poem; compare it either in the succession of the images or of the sentences; I am reminded of the sublime prayer and hymn of praise, which Milton, in opposition to an established liturgy, presents as a fair specimen of common extemporary devotion, and such as we might expect to hear from every self-inspired minister of a conventicle! And I reflect with delight, how little a mere theory, though of his own workmanship, interferes with the processes of genuine imagination in a man of true poetic genius, who possesses, as Mr. Wordsworth, if ever man did, most assuredly does possess,

> "The Vision and the Faculty divine."[3]

One point then alone remains, but that the most important; its examination having been, indeed, my chief inducement for the preceding inquisition. "There neither is nor can be any essential difference between the language of prose and metrical composition."[4] Such is Mr. Wordsworth's assertion. Now prose itself, at least in all argumentative and consecutive works, differs, and ought to differ, from the language of conversation; even as[5] reading ought to differ from

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[2] [P. W. vol. II. p. 127. S. C.]

[3] [The Excursion, B. I. P. W. vi. p. 6. S. C.]

[4] [P. W. II. p. 315. Preface. The word *essential* is marked with italics in the edition of 1840. S. C.]

[5] It is no less an error in teachers, than a torment to the poor children, to enforce the necessity of reading as they would

talking. Unless therefore the difference denied be that of the mere words, as materials common to all styles of writing, and not of the style itself in the universally admitted sense of the term, it might be naturally presumed that there must exist a still greater between the ordonnance of poetic composition and that of prose, than is expected to distinguish prose from ordinary conversation.

There are not, indeed, examples wanting in the history of literature, of apparent paradoxes that have

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talk. In order to cure them of *singing* as it is called, that is, of too great a difference, the child is made to repeat the words with his eyes from off the book; and then, indeed, his tones resemble talking, as far as his fears, tears and trembling will permit. But as soon as the eye is again directed to the printed page, the spell begins anew; for an instinctive sense tells the child's feelings, that to utter its own momentary thoughts, and to recite the written thoughts of another, as of another, and a far wiser than himself, are two widely different things; and as the two acts are accompanied with widely different feelings, so must they justify different modes of enunciation. Joseph Lancaster, among his other sophistications of the excellent Dr. Bell's invaluable system, cures this fault of *singing*, by hanging fetters and chains on the child, to the music of which one of his school-fellows, who walks before, dolefully chants out the child's last speech and confession, birth, parentage, and education. And this soul-benumbing ignominy, this unholy and heart-hardening burlesque on the last fearful infliction of outraged law, in pronouncing the sentence to which the stern and familiarized judge not seldom bursts into tears, has been extolled as a happy and ingenious method of remedying—what? and how?—why, one extreme in order to introduce another, scarce less distant from good sense, and certainly likely to have worse moral effects, by enforcing a semblance of petulant ease and self-sufficiency, in repression, and possible after-perversion of the natural feelings. I have to beg Dr. Bell's pardon for this connection of the two names, but he knows that contrast is no less powerful a cause of association than likeness.

summoned the public wonder as new and startling truths, but which, on examination, have shrunk into tame and harmless truisms; as the eyes of a cat, seen in the dark, have been mistaken for flames of fire. But Mr. Wordsworth is among the last men, to whom a delusion of this kind would be attributed by any one, who had enjoyed the slightest opportunity of understanding his mind and character. Where an objection has been anticipated by such an author as natural, his answer to it must needs be interpreted in some sense which either is, or has been, or is capable of being controverted. My object then must be to discover some other meaning for the term "essential difference" in this place, exclusive of the indistinction and community of the words themselves. For whether there ought to exist a class of words in the English, in any degree resembling the poetic dialect of the Greek and Italian, is a question of very subordinate importance. The number of such words would be small indeed, in our language; and even in the Italian and Greek, they consist not so much of different words, as of slight differences in the forms of declining and conjugating the same words; forms, doubtless, which having been, at some period more or less remote, the common grammatic flexions of some tribe or province, had been accidentally appropriated to poetry by the general admiration of certain master intellects, the first established lights of inspiration, to whom that dialect happened to be native.

Essence, in its primary signification, means the principle of individuation, the inmost principle of the possibility of any thing, as that particular thing. It is equivalent to the idea of a thing, whenever we use the word, idea, with philosophic precision. Existence, on the other hand, is distinguished from essence, by the

superinduction of reality. Thus we speak of the essence, and essential properties of a circle; but we do not therefore assert, that any thing, which really exists, is mathematically circular. Thus too, without any tautology we contend for the existence of the Supreme Being; that is, for a reality correspondent to the idea. There is, next, a secondary use of the word essence, in which it signifies the point or ground of contra-distinction between two modifications of the same substance or subject. Thus we should be allowed to say, that the style of architecture of Westminster Abbey is essentially different from that of Saint Paul, even though both had been built with blocks cut into the same form, and from the same quarry. Only in this latter sense of the term must it have been denied by Mr. Wordsworth (for in this sense alone is it affirmed by the general opinion) that the language of poetry (that is the formal construction, or architecture, of the words and phrases) is essentially different from that of prose. Now the burden of the proof lies with the oppugner, not with the supporters of the common belief. Mr. Wordsworth, in consequence, assigns as the proof of his position, "that not only the language of a large portion of every good poem, even of the most elevated character, must necessarily, except with reference to the metre, in no respect differ from that of good prose, but likewise that some of the most interesting parts of the best poems will be found to be strictly the language of prose, when prose is well written. The truth of this assertion might be demonstrated by innumerable passages from almost all the poetical writings, even of Milton himself." He then quotes Gray's sonnet—

> "In vain to me the smiling mornings shine,
> And reddening Phœbus lifts his golden fire;

The birds in vain their amorous descant join,
Or cheerful fields resume their green attire.
These ears, alas! for other notes repine;
*A different object do these eyes require;*
*My lonely anguish melts no heart but mine;*
*And in my breast the imperfect joys expire.*
Yet morning smiles the busy race to cheer,
And new-born pleasure brings to happier men;
The fields to all their wonted tribute bear;
To warm their little loves the birds complain:
*I fruitless mourn to him that cannot hear,*
*And weep the more, because I weep in vain.*"

and adds the following remark:—"It will easily be perceived, that the only part of this Sonnet which is of any value, is the lines printed in Italics; it is equally obvious, that, except in the rhyme, and in the use of the single word "fruitless" for fruitlessly, which is so far a defect, the language of these lines does in no respect differ from that of prose." [6]

An idealist defending his system by the fact, that when asleep we often believe ourselves awake, was well answered by his plain neighbour, "Ah, but when awake do we ever believe ourselves asleep?" Things identical must be convertible. The preceding passage seems to rest on a similar sophism. For the question is not, whether there may not occur in prose an order of words, which would be equally proper in a poem; nor whether there are not beautiful lines and sentences of frequent occurrence in good poems, which would be equally becoming as well as beautiful in good prose; for neither the one nor the other has ever been either denied or doubted by any one. The true question must be, whether there are not modes of expression, a construction, and an order of sentences,

[6] [P. W. II. pp. 313-14. S. C.]

which are in their fit and natural place in a serious prose composition, but would be disproportionate and heterogeneous in metrical poetry; and, *vice versa*, whether in the language of a serious poem there may not be an arrangement both of words and sentences, and a use and selection of (what are called) figures of speech, both as to their kind, their frequency, and their occasions, which on a subject of equal weight would be vicious and alien in correct and manly prose. I contend, that in both cases this unfitness of each for the place of the other frequently will and ought to exist.

And first from the origin of metre. This I would trace to the balance in the mind effected by that spontaneous effort which strives to hold in check the workings of passion. It might be easily explained likewise in what manner this salutary antagonism is assisted by the very state, which it counteracts; and how this balance of antagonists became organized into metre (in the usual acceptation of that term), by a supervening act of the will and judgment, consciously and for the foreseen purpose of pleasure. Assuming these principles, as the *data* of our argument, we deduce from them two legitimate conditions, which the critic is entitled to expect in every metrical work. First, that, as the elements of metre owe their existence to a state of increased excitement, so the metre itself should be accompanied by the natural language of excitement. Secondly, that as these elements are formed into metre artificially, by a voluntary act, with the design and for the purpose of blending delight with emotion, so the traces of present volition should throughout the metrical language be proportionably discernible. Now these two conditions must be reconciled and co-present. There must be not only a partnership, but a union;

an interpenetration of passion and of will, of spontaneous impulse and of voluntary purpose. Again, this union can be manifested only in a frequency of forms and figures of speech, (originally the offspring of passion, but now the adopted children of power), greater than would be desired or endured, where the emotion is not voluntarily encouraged and kept up for the sake of that pleasure, which such emotion, so tempered and mastered by the will, is found capable of communicating. It not only dictates, but of itself tends to produce a more frequent employment of picturesque and vivifying language, than would be natural in any other case, in which there did not exist, as there does in the present, a previous and well understood, though tacit, compact between the poet and his reader, that the latter is entitled to expect, and the former bound to supply this species and degree of pleasurable excitement. We may in some measure apply to this union the answer of Polixenes, in the Winter's Tale, to Perdita's neglect of the streaked gilliflowers, because she had heard it said,

> "There is an art, which, in their piedness, shares
> With great creating nature.
> *Pol.*" Say there be;
> Yet nature is made better by no mean,
> But nature makes that mean; so, o'er that art,
> Which, you say, adds to nature, is an art,
> That nature makes. You see, sweet maid, we marry
> *A gentler scion to the wildest stock;*
> And make conceive a bark of baser kind
> By bud of nobler race. This is an art,
> Which does mend nature,—change it rather; but
> The art itself is nature."[7]

Secondly, I argue from the effects of metre. As far

[7] [Act iv. sc. iii. S. C.]

as metre acts in and for itself, it tends to increase the vivacity and susceptibility both of the general feelings and of the attention. This effect it produces by the continued excitement of surprise, and by the quick reciprocations of curiosity still gratified and still re-excited, which are too slight indeed to be at any one moment objects of distinct consciousness, yet become considerable in their aggregate influence. As a medicated atmosphere, or as wine during animated conversation, they act powerfully, though themselves unnoticed. Where, therefore, correspondent food and appropriate matter are not provided for the attention and feelings thus roused there must needs be a disappointment felt; like that of leaping in the dark from the last step of a stair-case, when we had prepared our muscles for a leap of three or four.

The discussion on the powers of metre in the preface is highly ingenious and touches at all points on truth. But I cannot find any statement of its powers considered abstractly and separately. On the contrary Mr. Wordsworth seems always to estimate metre by the powers, which it exerts during, (and, as I think, in consequence of), its combination with other elements of poetry. Thus the previous difficulty is left unanswered, what the elements are, with which it must be combined, in order to produce its own effects to any pleasurable purpose. Double and tri-syllable rhymes, indeed, form a lower species of wit, and, attended to exclusively for their own sake, may become a source of momentary amusement; as in poor Smart's distich to the Welsh Squire who had promised him a hare:

> "Tell me, thou son of great Cadwallader!
> Hast sent the hare? or hast thou swallow'd her?"

But for any poetic purposes, metre resembles, (if the aptness of the simile may excuse its meanness),

yeast, worthless or disagreeable by itself, but giving vivacity and spirit to the liquor with which it is proportionally combined.

The reference to THE CHILDREN IN THE WOOD[8] by no means satisfies my judgment. We all willingly throw ourselves back for awhile into the feelings of our childhood. This ballad, therefore, we read under such recollections of our own childish feelings, as would equally endear to us poems, which Mr. Wordsworth himself would regard as faulty in the opposite extreme of gaudy and technical ornament. Before the invention of printing, and in a still greater degree, before the introduction of writing, metre, especially alliterative metre, (whether alliterative at the beginning of the words, as in PIERCE PLOUMAN, or at the end, as in rhymes,) possessed an independent value as assisting the recollection, and consequently the preservation, of any series of truths or incidents. But I am not convinced by the collation of facts, that THE CHILDREN IN THE WOOD owes either its preservation, or its popularity, to its metrical form. Mr. Marshal's repository affords a number of tales in prose inferiour in pathos and general merit, some of as old a date, and many as widely popular. TOM HICKATHRIFT, JACK THE GIANT-KILLER, GOODY TWO-SHOES, and LITTLE RED RIDING-HOOD are formidable rivals. And that they have continued in prose, cannot be fairly explained by the assumption, that the comparative meanness of their thoughts and images precluded even the humblest forms of metre. The scene of GOODY TWO-SHOES in the church is perfectly susceptible of metrical narration; and, among the Θαυμαστα θαυμαστότατα even of the present age, I do not recollect a more astonishing image than that

[8] [P. 333. S. C.]

of the "whole rookery, that flew out of the giant's beard," scared by the tremendous voice, with which this monster answered the challenge of the heroic TOM HICKATHRIFT!

If from these we turn to compositions universally, and independently of all early associations, beloved and admired; would the MARIA, THE MONK, or THE POOR MAN'S ASS of Sterne,[8] be read with more delight, or have a better chance of immortality, had they without any change in the diction been composed in rhyme, than in their present state? If I am not grossly mistaken, the general reply would be in the negative. Nay, I will confess, that, in Mr. Wordsworth's own volumes, the ANECDOTE FOR FATHERS, SIMON LEE, ALICE FELL, BEGGARS, and THE SAILOR'S MOTHER,[9] notwithstanding the beauties which are to be found in each of them where the poet interposes the music of his own thoughts, would have been more delightful to me in prose, told and managed, as by Mr. Wordsworth they would have been, in a moral essay or pedestrian tour.

Metre in itself is simply a stimulant of the attention, and therefore excites the question: Why is the attention to be thus stimulated? Now the question cannot be answered by the pleasure of the metre itself: for this we have shown to be conditional, and dependent on the appropriateness of the thoughts and expressions, to which the metrical form is superadded. Neither can I conceive any other answer that can be rationally given, short of this: I write in metre, because I am about to use a language different from that of prose.

[8] [Sentimental Journey and Tristram Shandy. Works II. pp. 247, 394, 271, 312. S. C.]

[9] [P. W. I. p. 22. V. p. 17. I. p. 13. II. p. 101. I. p. 182. S. C.]

Besides, where the language is not such, how interesting soever the reflections are, that are capable of being drawn by a philosophic mind from the thoughts or incidents of the poem, the metre itself must often become feeble. Take the three last stanzas of THE SAILOR'S MOTHER, for instance. If I could for a moment abstract from the effect produced on the author's feelings, as a man, by the incident at the time of its real occurrence, I would dare appeal to his own judgment, whether in the metre itself he found a sufficient reason for *their* being written *metrically?*

And, thus continuing, she said
"I had a Son, who many a day
Sailed on the seas; but he is dead;
In Denmark he was cast away;
And I have travelled far as Hull, to see
What clothes he might have left, or other property.[10]

The Bird and Cage they both were his:
'Twas my Son's Bird; and neat and trim
He kept it: many voyages
This Singing-bird hath gone with him;
When last he sailed he left the Bird behind;
As it might be, perhaps, from bodings of his mind.

He to a Fellow-lodger's care
Had left it, to be watched and fed,

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[10] [In the edit. of 1840,

"And I have travelled weary miles to see
If aught which he had owned might still remain for me."

The last line of stanza 5 in that edit. stands thus:

"From bodings, as might be, that hung upon his mind."

The end of stanza 6 has been altered thus:

"And pipe its song in safety;—there
I found it when my Son was dead;
And now, God help me for my little wit!
I bear it with me, Sir;—he took so much delight in it." S. C.]

Till he came back again; and there
I found it when my Son was dead;
And now, God help me for my little wit!
I trail it with me, Sir! he took so much delight in it."

If disproportioning the emphasis we read these stanzas so as to make the rhymes perceptible, even tri-syllable rhymes could scarcely produce an equal sense of oddity and strangeness, as we feel here in finding *rhymes at all* in sentences so exclusively colloquial. I would further ask whether, but for that visionary state, into which the figure of the woman and the susceptibility of his own genius had placed the poet's imagination,—(a state, which spreads its influence and colouring over all, that co-exists with the exciting cause, and in which

"The simplest, and the most familiar things
Gain a strange power of spreading awe around them,")[11]

I would ask the poet whether he would not have

[11] Altered from the description of Night-Mair in the REMORSE.

"Oh Heaven! 'twas frightful! Now run down and stared at
By hideous shapes that cannot be remembered;
Now seeing nothing and imagining nothing;
But only being afraid—stifled with fear!
While every goodly or familiar form
Had a strange power of spreading terror round me!"*

N. B. Though Shakespeare has, for his own *all-justifying* purposes, introduced the Night-*Mare* with her own foals, yet Mair means a Sister, or perhaps a Hag.

* [Coleridge's Poet. Works, II. p. 209. Act iv. sc. 1. Altered thus:

O sleep of horrors! Now run down and stared at
By forms so hideous that they mock remembrance—
Now seeing nothing, &c. S. C.]

felt an abrupt down-fall in these verses from the preceding stanza?

> "The ancient spirit is not dead;
> Old times, thought I, are breathing there;
> Proud was I that my country bred
> Such strength, a dignity so fair:
> She begged an alms, like one in poor estate;
> I looked at her again, nor did my pride abate."

It must not be omitted, and is besides worthy of notice, that those stanzas furnish the only fair instance that I have been able to discover in all Mr. Wordsworth's writings, of an actual adoption, or true imitation, of *the real and very language of low and rustic life*, freed from provincialisms.

Thirdly, I deduce the position from all the causes elsewhere assigned, which render metre the proper form of poetry, and poetry imperfect and defective without metre. Metre, therefore, having been connected with poetry most often and by a peculiar fitness, whatever else is combined with metre must, though it be not itself essentially poetic, have nevertheless some property in common with poetry, as an *intermedium* of affinity, a sort, (if I may dare borrow a well-known phrase from technical chemistry), of *mordaunt* between it and the super-added metre. Now poetry, Mr. Wordsworth truly affirms, does always imply passion; which word must be here understood in its most general sense, as an excited state of the feelings and faculties. And as every passion has its proper pulse, so will it likewise have its characteristic modes of expression. But where there exists that degree of genius and talent which entitles a writer to aim at the honours of a poet, the very act of poetic composition itself is, and is allowed to imply and to produce, an unusual state of excitement, which of course justifies and de-

mands a correspondent difference of language, as truly, though not perhaps in as marked a degree, as the excitement of love, fear, rage, or jealousy. The vividness of the descriptions or declamations in Donne, or Dryden, is as much and as often derived from the force and fervour of the describer, as from the reflections, forms or incidents, which constitute their subject and materials. The wheels take fire from the mere rapidity of their motion. To what extent, and under what modifications, this may be admitted to act, I shall attempt to define in an after remark on Mr. Wordsworth's reply to this objection, or rather on his objection to this reply, as already anticipated in his preface.

Fourthly, and as intimately connected with this, if not the same argument in a more general form, I adduce the high spiritual instinct of the human being impelling us to seek unity by harmonious adjustment, and thus establishing the principle, that *all* the parts of an organized whole must be assimilated to the more *important* and *essential* parts. This and the preceding arguments may be strengthened by the reflection, that the composition of a poem is among the imitative arts; and that imitation, as opposed to copying, consists either in the interfusion of the same throughout the radically different, or of the different throughout a base radically the same.

Lastly, I appeal to the practice of the best poets, of all countries and in all ages, as authorizing the opinion, (deduced from all the foregoing) that in every import of the word essential, which would not here involve a mere truism, there may be, is, and ought to be, an *essential* difference between the language of prose and of metrical composition.

In Mr. Wordsworth's criticism of Gray's Sonnet,

the reader's sympathy with his praise or blame of the different parts is taken for granted rather perhaps too easily. He has not, at least, attempted to win or compel it by argumentative analysis. In my conception at least, the lines rejected as of no value do, with the exception of the two first, differ as much and as little from the language of common life, as those which he has printed in italics as possessing genuine excellence. Of the five lines thus honourably distinguished, two of them differ from prose even more widely, than the lines which either precede or follow, in the position of the words.

> *" A different object do these eyes require ;*
> My lonely anguish melts no heart but mine ;
> *And in my breast the imperfect joys expire."*

But were it otherwise, what would this prove, but a truth, of which no man ever doubted ?—*videlicet*, that there are sentences, which would be equally in their place both in verse and prose. Assuredly it does not prove the point, which alone requires proof; namely, that there are not passages, which would suit the one and not suit the other. The first line of this sonnet is distinguished from the ordinary language of men by the epithet to morning. For we will set aside, at present, the consideration, that the particular word "smiling" is hackneyed, and, as it involves a sort of personification, not quite congruous with the common and material attribute of "*shining*." And, doubtless, this adjunction of epithets for the purpose of additional description, where no particular attention is demanded for the quality of the thing, would be noticed as giving a poetic cast to a man's conversation. Should the sportsman exclaim, "Come boys ! the rosy morning calls you up :"—he will be supposed to have some song

in his head. But no one suspects this, when he says, "A wet morning shall not confine us to our beds." This then is either a defect in poetry, or it is not. Whoever should decide in the affirmative, I would request him to re-peruse any one poem, of any confessedly great poet from Homer to Milton, or from Æschylus to Shakespeare; and to strike out, (in thought I mean), every instance of this kind. If the number of these fancied erasures did not startle him; or if he continued to deem the work improved by their total omission; he must advance reasons of no ordinary strength and evidence, reasons grounded in the essence of human nature. Otherwise I should not hesitate to consider him as a man not so much proof against all authority, as dead to it.

The second line,

"And reddening Phœbus lifts his golden fire;—"

has indeed almost as many faults as words. But then it is a bad line, not because the language is distinct from that of prose; but because it conveys incongruous images; because it confounds the cause and the effect, the real thing with the personified representative of the thing; in short, because it differs from the language of good sense! That the "Phœbus" is hackneyed, and a school-boy image, is an accidental fault, dependent on the age in which the author wrote, and not deduced from the nature of the thing. That it is part of an exploded mythology, is an objection more deeply grounded. Yet when the torch of ancient learning was re-kindled, so cheering were its beams, that our eldest poets, cut off by Christianity from all accredited machinery, and deprived of all acknowledged guardians and symbols of the great objects of nature, were naturally induced to adopt, as a poetic language,

those fabulous personages, those forms of the[12] supernatural in nature, which had given them such dear delight in the poems of their great masters. Nay, even at this day what scholar of genial taste will not so far sympathize with them, as to read with pleasure in Petrarch, Chaucer, or Spenser, what he would perhaps condemn as puerile in a modern poet?

I remember no poet, whose writings would safelier stand the test of Mr. Wordsworth's theory, than Spenser. Yet will Mr. Wordsworth say, that the style of the following stanza is either undistinguished from prose, and the language of ordinary life? Or that it is vicious, and that the stanzas are *blots* in THE FAERY QUEEN?

"By this the northern wagoner had set
His sevenfold teme behind the stedfast starre,
That was in ocean waves yet never wet,
But firme is fixt and sendeth light from farre
To all that in the wild deep wandering arre:
And chearfull chaunticlere with his note shrill
Had warned once that Phœbus' fiery carre
In hast was climbing up the easterne hill,
Full envious that night so long his roome did fill."[13]

"At last the golden orientall gate
Of greatest heaven gan to open fayre,
And Phœbus fresh, as brydegrome to his mate,
Came dauncing forth, shaking his deawie hayre,
And hurl'd his glist'ring beams through gloomy ayre:
Which when the wakeful elfe perceived, streightway
He started up, and did him selfe prepayre

[12] But still more by the mechanical system of philosophy which has needlessly infected our theological opinions, and teaching us to consider the world in its relation to God, as of a building to its mason, leaves the idea of omnipresence a mere abstract notion in the state-room of our reason.

[13] [Book I. can. ii. st. 1.]

In sun-bright armes and battailous array;
For with that pagan proud he combat will that day." [14]

On the contrary to how many passages, both in hymn books and in blank verse poems, could I, (were it not invidious), direct the reader's attention, the style of which is most unpoetic, because, and only because, it is the style of prose? He will not suppose me capable of having in my mind such verses, as

"I put my hat upon my head
And walk'd into the Strand;
And there I met another man,
Whose hat was in his hand."

To such specimens it would indeed be a fair and full reply, that these lines are not bad, because they are unpoetic; but because they are empty of all sense and feeling; and that it were an idle attempt to prove that "an ape is not a Newton, when it is self-evident that he is not a man." [15] But the sense shall be good and weighty, the language correct and dignified, the subject interesting and treated with feeling; and yet the style shall, notwithstanding all these merits, be justly blamable as prosaic, and solely because the words and the order of the words would find their appropriate place in prose, but are not suitable to metrical composition. The CIVIL WARS of Daniel is an instructive, and even interesting work; but take the following stanzas, (and from the hundred instances which abound I might probably have selected others far more striking):

"And to the end we may with better ease
Discern the true discourse, vouchsafe to shew
What were the times foregoing near to these,
That these we may with better profit know.

[14] [Book I. can. v. st. 2.]

[15] [Preface, pp. 333-4.]

Tell how the world fell into this disease;
And how so great distemperature did grow;
So shall we see with what degrees it came;
How things at full do soon wax out of frame."

"Ten kings had from the Norman Conqu'ror reign'd
With intermix'd and variable fate,
When England to her greatest height attain'd
Of power, dominion, glory, wealth, and state;
After it had with much ado sustain'd
The violence of princes, with debate
For titles, and the often mutinies
Of nobles for their ancient liberties."

For first, the Norman, conqu'ring all by might,
By might was forc'd to keep what he had got;
Mixing our customs and the form of right
With foreign constitutions, he had brought;
Mast'ring the mighty, humbling the poorer wight,
By all severest means that could be wrought;
And, making the succession doubtful, rent
His new-got state, and left it turbulent." [16]

Will it be contended on the one side, that these lines are mean and senseless? Or on the other, that they are not prosaic, and for *that* reason unpoetic? This poet's well-merited epithet is that of the "well-languaged Daniel;" but likewise, and by the consent of his contemporaries no less than of all succeeding critics, the "prosaic Daniel." Yet those, who thus designate this wise and amiable writer from the frequent incorrespondency of his diction to his metre in the majority of his compositions, not only deem them valuable and interesting on other accounts; but willingly admit, that there are to be found throughout his poems, and especially in his EPISTLES and in his HYMEN'S TRIUMPH, many and exquisite specimens

[16] [Book I. Stanzas vii. viii. and ix.]

of that style which, as the *neutral ground* of prose and verse, is common to both. A fine and almost faultless extract, eminent as for other beauties, so for its perfection in this species of diction, may be seen in Lamb's DRAMATIC SPECIMENS,[17] a work of various interest from the nature of the selections themselves,—(all from the plays of Shakespeare's contemporaries),—and deriving a high additional value from the notes, which are full of just and original criticism, expressed with all the freshness of originality.

Among the possible effects of practical adherence to a theory, that aims to identify the style of prose

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[17] [Specimens of English Dramatic Poets who lived about the time of Shakespeare, with notes by Charles Lamb. Vol. i. p. 284.

The first extract, Love in Infancy, is as follows:

Ah, I remember well (and how can I
But evermore remember well) when first
Our flame began, when scarce we knew what was
The flame we felt: when as we sat and sigh'd
And look'd upon each other, and conceiv'd
Not what we ail'd, yet something we did ail;
And yet were well, and yet we were not well.
And what was our disease we could not tell,
Then would we kiss, then sigh, then look: And thus
In that first garden of our simpleness
We spent our childhood: But when years began
To reap the fruit of knowledge; ah, how then
Would she with graver looks, with sweet stern brow,
Check my presumption and my forwardness;
Yet still would give me flowers, still would me shew
What she would have me, yet not have me, know.

Two other extracts are also given; Love after death—

Fie, Thyrsis, with what fond remembrances
Dost thou, &c.

and the story of Isulia. S. C.]

and verse,—(if it does not indeed claim for the latter a yet nearer resemblance to the average style of men in the *vivâ voce* intercourse of real life)—we might anticipate the following as not the least likely to occur. It will happen, as I have indeed before observed, that the metre itself, the sole acknowledged difference, will occasionally become metre to the eye only. The existence of *prosaisms*, and that they detract from the merit of a poem, *must* at length be conceded, when a number of successive lines can be rendered, even to the most delicate ear, unrecognizable as verse, or as having even been intended for verse, by simply transcribing them as prose: when if the poem be in blank verse, this can be effected without any alteration, or at most by merely restoring one or two words to their proper places, from which they had been transplanted[18] for no assignable cause or reason but that of the author's convenience; but if it be

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[18] As the ingenious gentleman under the influence of the Tragic Muse contrived to dislocate, "I wish you a good morning, Sir! Thank you, Sir, and I wish you the same," into two blank-verse heroics:—

> To you a morning good, good Sir! I wish.
> You, Sir! I thank: to you the same wish I.

In those parts of Mr. Wordsworth's works which I have thoroughly studied, I find fewer instances in which this would be practicable than I have met in many poems, where an approximation of prose has been sedulously and on system guarded against. Indeed excepting the stanzas already quoted from THE SAILOR'S MOTHER, I can recollect but one instance: that is to say, a short passage of four or five lines in THE BROTHERS,* that model of *English* pastoral, which I never yet read with unclouded eye.—"James, pointing to its summit, over which they had all purposed to return together, informed them that he would wait

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* [P. W. I. p. 109. S. C.]

in rhyme, by the mere exchange of the final word of each line for some other of the same meaning, equally appropriate, dignified and euphonic.

The answer or objection in the preface to the anticipated remark "that metre paves the way to other distinctions,"[19] is contained in the following words. "The distinction of rhyme and metre is regular and uniform, and not, like that produced by (what is usually called) poetic diction, arbitrary, and subject to infinite caprices, upon which no calculation whatever can be made. In the one case the reader is utterly at the mercy of the poet respecting what imagery or diction he may choose to connect with the passion."[20] But is this a *poet*, of whom a poet is speaking? No surely! rather of a fool or madman: or at best of a vain or ignorant phantast! And might not brains so wild and so deficient make just the same havock with rhymes and metres, as they are supposed to effect with modes and figures

for them there. They parted, and his comrades passed that way some two hours after, but they did not find him at the appointed place, *a circumstance of which they took no heed*: but one of them, going by chance into the house, which at this time was James's house, learnt *there*, that nobody had seen him all that day." The only change which has been made is in the position of the little word *there* in two instances, the position in the original being clearly such as is not adopted in ordinary conversation. The other words printed in italics were so marked because, though good and genuine English, they are not the phraseology of common conversation either in the word put in apposition, or in the connection by the genitive pronoun. Men in general would have said, "but that was a circumstance they paid no attention to, or took no notice of;" and the language is, on the theory of the preface, justified only by the narrator's being the Vicar. Yet if any ear *could* suspect, that these sentences were ever printed as metre, on those very words alone could the suspicion have been grounded.

[19] [Preface p. 316. S. C.]

[20] [Ib. pp. 325-6. S. C.]

of speech? How is the reader at the mercy of such men? If he continue to read their nonsense, is it not his own fault? The ultimate end of criticism is much more to establish the principles of writing, than to furnish rules how to pass judgment on what has been written by others; if indeed it were possible that the two could be separated. But if it be asked, by what principles the poet is to regulate his own style, if he do not adhere closely to the sort and order of words which he hears in the market, wake, high-road, or plough-field? I reply; by principles, the ignorance or neglect of which would convict him of being no poet, but a silly or presumptuous usurper of the name. By the principles of grammar, logic, psychology. In one word by such a knowledge of the facts, material and spiritual, that most appertain to his art, as, if it have been governed and applied by good sense, and rendered instinctive by habit, becomes the representative and reward of our past conscious reasonings, insights, and conclusions, and acquires the name of Taste. By what *rule* that does not leave the reader at the poet's mercy, and the poet at his own, is the latter to distinguish between the language suitable to suppressed, and the language, which is characteristic of indulged, anger? Or between that of rage and that of jealousy? Is it obtained by wandering about in search of angry or jealous people in uncultivated society, in order to copy their words? Or not far rather by the power of imagination proceeding upon the *all in each* of human nature? By meditation, rather than by observation? And by the latter in consequence only of the former? As eyes, for which the former has pre-determined their field of vision, and to which, as to *its* organ, it communicates a microscopic power? There is not, I firmly believe, a man now living, who has, from his own inward experience, a clearer intuition, than Mr.

Wordsworth himself, that the last mentioned are the true sources of *genial* discrimination. Through the same process and by the same creative agency will the poet distinguish the degree and kind of the excitement produced by the very act of poetic composition. As intuitively will he know, what differences of style it at once inspires and justifies; what intermixture of conscious volition is natural to that state; and in what instances such figures and colours of speech degenerate into mere creatures of an arbitrary purpose, cold technical artifices of ornament or connection. For, even as truth is its own light and evidence, discovering at once itself and falsehood, so is it the prerogative of poetic genius to distinguish by parental instinct its proper offspring from the changelings, which the gnomes of vanity or the fairies of fashion may have laid in its cradle or called by its names. Could a rule be given from without, poetry would cease to be poetry, and sink into a mechanical art. It would be μόρφωσις, not ποίησις. The rules of the Imagination are themselves the very powers of growth and production. The words to which they are reducible, present only the outlines and external appearance of the fruit. A deceptive counterfeit of the superficial form and colours may be elaborated; but the marble peach feels cold and heavy, and children only put it to their mouths. We find no difficulty in admitting as excellent, and the legitimate language of poetic fervour self-impassioned, Donne's apostrophe to the Sun in the second stanza of his PROGRESS OF THE SOUL.

> "Thee, eye of heaven! this great Soul envies not;
> By thy male force is all, we have, begot.
> In the first East thou now beginn'st to shine,
> Suck'st early balm and island spices there,
> And wilt anon in thy loose-rein'd career

At Tagus, Po, Seine, Thames, and Danow dine,
And see at night this western world of mine:
Yet hast thou not more nations seen than she,
Who before thee one day began to be,
And, thy frail light being quench'd, shall long, long outlive thee."

Or the next stanza but one:

"Great Destiny, the commissary of God,
That hast mark'd out a path and period
For every thing! Who, where we offspring took,
Our ways and ends see'st at one instant: thou
Knot of all causes! Thou, whose changeless brow
Ne'er smiles nor frowns! O! vouchsafe thou to look,
And shew my story in thy eternal book, &c."

As little difficulty do we find in excluding from the honours of unaffected warmth and elevation the madness prepense of pseudopoesy, or the startling hysteric of weakness over-exerting itself, which bursts on the unprepared reader in sundry odes and apostrophes to abstract terms. Such are the Odes to Jealousy, to Hope, to Oblivion, and the like, in Dodsley's collection and the magazines of that day, which seldom fail to remind me of an Oxford copy of verses on the two SUTTONS, commencing with

"Inoculation, heavenly maid! descend!"

It is not to be denied that men of undoubted talents, and even poets of true, though not of first-rate, genius, have from a mistaken theory deluded both themselves and others in the opposite extreme. I once read to a company of sensible and well-educated women the introductory period of Cowley's preface to his "Pindaric Odes, written in imitation of the style and manner of the odes of Pindar. "If," (says Cowley), "a man should undertake to translate Pindar, word for word, it would be thought that one madman had translated

another; as may appear, when he, that understands not the original, reads the verbal traduction of him into Latin prose, than which nothing seems more raving." I then proceeded with his own free version of the second Olympic, composed for the charitable purpose of *rationalizing* the Theban Eagle.

" Queen of all harmonious things,
Dancing words and speaking strings,
What god, what hero, wilt thou sing?
What happy man to equal glories bring?
Begin, begin thy noble choice,
And let the hills around reflect the image of thy voice.
Pisa does to Jove belong,
Jove and Pisa claim thy song.
The fair first-fruits of war, th' Olympic games,
Alcides offer'd up to Jove;
Alcides, too, thy strings may move,
But, oh! what man to join with these can worthy prove?
Join Theron boldly to their sacred names;
Theron the next honour claims;
Theron to no man gives place,
Is first in Pisa's and in Virtue's race;
Theron there, and he alone,
Ev'n his own swift forefathers has outgone."

One of the company exclaimed, with the full assent of the rest, that if the original were madder than this, it must be incurably mad.[21] I then translated the ode

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[21] [But is not this equally delirious, close as it keeps, to the Pindaric images? It is the exordium of the first Pythian, characterized by "lightning energy" in an article on Pindar by Mr. Coleridge's late editor. Q. Review, March, 1834.

O thou whom Phœbus and the quire
Of *violet tressed* Muses own,
Their joint treasure, golden Lyre,
Ruling step with warbled tone, &c., &c.
*In thy mazes, steep'd, expire*
*Bolts of ever flowing fire.*

from the Greek, and as nearly as possible, word for word; and the impression was, that in the general

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Jove's eagle on the sceptre slumbers
Possest by thy enchanting numbers:
On either side, his rapid wing,
Drops, entranc'd, the feather'd king;
*Black vapour o'er his curved head,*
*Sealing his eyelids, sweetly shed;*
Upheaving his *moist* back he *lies,*
Held down with thrilling harmonies.

Surely this is but a brilliant chaos. "Hyacinthine locks" have been kindly received at the bounteous hand of Milton, though no one in this age of the world, quite understands the epithet, or has seen that *black* or *ferrugineous*, or "*ensanguined* flower *inscribed with woe*;" the ancient hyacinth. The sound is beautiful, and we imagine the sense to be right; but *violet* tresses look as strangely in our modern eyes as the green locks of the Nereids; for to *us* the violet is the type of blueness, and we talk of violet eyes but never of violet hair. Then Pindar as little dreamed of presenting to his auditors a *moist-backed* eagle, by the phrase ὑγρὸν νῶτον, as we nowadays dream of bringing into view a man with *drenched* raiment of a peculiar cut when we mention a *wet* Quaker. And who can suppose that the eagle was *lying* held down by harmony? That would be an inconvenient posture for a sleeping biped, however convenient for the translator's verse. According to Moore

Slumbering he sits aloft
With ruffling plumes and heaving spine
Quelled by thy potent strain.

It is interesting to compare Cowley's second Olympic of which stanzas iii. v. and vii. are very readable in their way, with Moore's and Cary's translations—to see how the first displays the genius of Cowley, while the others are attempts at adapting Pindar to our language, and are the works of poetical minds rather than of poets. There are very good passages in Mr. Cary's translation, but it strikes me as a fault in his version, that it brings the lyric flow of the Allegro, Penseroso and Lycidas so strongly to mind, that we seem to be reading Milton instead of Pindar, yet feel that we have the mere manner of the one and

movement of the periods, in the form of the connections and transitions, and in the sober majesty of lofty

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the bare matter of the other. Those who bring a knowledge of the original to Moore's and Cary's translations, and thus illuminate them with Pindar himself, may enjoy the perusal; to others they must seem, I should think, like water of Helicon bewitched. Cary's Dante, on the other hand, is a noble poem that may be read and admired apart from the Italian.

A prose translation, like that of the Psalms and Prophets, would exhibit more of Pindar to the English reader, or would at least disguise him less than any metrical version of a poet, whose metre is so irrepresentable in a modern tongue, and whose metaphors are so bold, and thickly interlaced, that in order to be well understood they should be rendered into the plainest and most straight-forward language that can be employed. I tried the simple plan thus, but cannot judge whether it will seem tolerable to others,

Golden Lyre, joint possession of Apollo and the Muses with
braided hair dusky as violets,
Thee the movements of the choir obey, thou Ruler of Festivity,
And the singers attend to thy signals,
When thrillingly thou settest up the preamble which leads the
feet of the dancers.
Also thou quenchest the pointed thunder-bolt
Of everlasting fire; for Jove's Eagle sleeps on the sceptre, his
swift wing drooping on each side,
King of Birds,
When o'er his curv'd head thou hast pour'd a dark mist, sweet
seal of his eyelids, he slumbering
Lifts up the plumes of his back, overcome by thy vibrations.
Yea and ev'n impetuous Mars, far away from the bristling spear-
ranks,
Softens his heart with sleep,—and thy shafts soothe the souls
of the divinities,
Through the skill of Latona's son, Apollo, and the deep-bosom'd
Muses.

Gray and Akenside have each given a modification of this passage, the one in the Progress of Poetry, the other in his Hymn to the Naiads. S. C.]

sense, it appeared to them to approach more nearly, than any other poetry they had heard, to the style of our Bible in the prophetic books. The first strophe will suffice as a specimen:

" Ye harp-controlling hymns! (or) ye hymns the sovereigns of harps!
What God? what Hero?
What Man shall we celebrate?
Truly Pisa indeed is of Jove,
But the Olympiad (or the Olympic games) did Hercules establish,
The first-fruits of the spoils of war.
But Theron for the four-horsed car,
That bore victory to him,
It behoves us now to voice aloud:
The Just, the Hospitable,
The Bulwark of Agrigentum,
Of renowned fathers
The Flower, even him
Who preserves his native city erect and safe."

But are such rhetorical caprices condemnable only for their deviation from the language of real life? and are they by no other means to be precluded, but by the rejection of all distinctions between prose and verse, save that of metre? Surely good sense, and a moderate insight into the constitution of the human mind, would be amply sufficient to prove, that such language and such combinations are the native produce neither of the fancy nor of the imagination; that their operation consists in the excitement of surprise by the juxta-position and *apparent* reconciliation of widely different or incompatible things. As when, for instance, the hills are made to reflect the image of a *voice*. Surely, no unusual taste is requisite to see clearly, that this compulsory juxta-position is not produced by the presentation of impressive or delightful forms to the inward vision, nor by any sympathy with the mo-

difying powers with which the genius of the poet had united and inspirited all the objects of his thought; that it is therefore a species of *wit*, a pure work of the *will*, and implies a leisure and self-possession both of thought and of feeling, incompatible with the steady fervour of a mind possessed and filled with the grandeur of its subject. To sum up the whole in one sentence. When a poem, or a part of a poem, shall be adduced, which is evidently vicious in the figures and contexture of its style, yet for the condemnation of which no reason can be assigned, except that it differs from the style in which men actually converse, then, and not till then, can I hold this theory to be either plausible, or practicable, or capable of furnishing either rule, guidance, or precaution, that might not, more easily and more safely, as well as more naturally, have been deduced in the author's own mind from considerations of grammar, logic, and the truth and nature of things, confirmed by the authority of works, whose fame is not of one country, nor of one age.

## CHAPTER VI.

*Continuation—Concerning the real object which, it is probable, Mr. Wordsworth had before him in his critical preface—Elucidation and application of this.*

IT might appear from some passages in the former part of Mr. Wordsworth's preface, that he meant to confine his theory of style, and the necessity of a close accordance with the actual language of men, to those particular subjects from low and rustic life.

which by way of experiment he had purposed to naturalize as a new species in our English poetry. But from the train of argument that follows; from the reference to Milton; and from the spirit of his critique on Gray's sonnet; those sentences appear to have been rather courtesies of modesty, than actual limitations of his system. Yet so groundless does this system appear on a close examination; and so strange and overwhelming[1] in its consequences, that I cannot, and I do not, believe that the poet did ever himself adopt it in the unqualified sense, in which his expressions have been understood by others, and which, indeed, according to all the common laws of interpretation they seem to bear. What then did he mean? I apprehend, that in the clear perception, not unaccompanied with disgust or contempt, of the gaudy affectations of a style which passed current with too many for poetic diction, (though in truth it had as little pretensions to poetry, as to logic or common sense,) he narrowed his view for the time; and feeling a justifiable preference for the language of nature and of good sense, even in its humblest and least ornamented forms, he suffered himself to express, in terms at once too large and too exclusive, his predilection for a style the most remote possible from the false and showy splendour

[1] I had in my mind the striking but untranslatable epithet, which the celebrated Mendelssohn applied to the great founder of the Critical Philosophy "*Der alleszermalmende* KANT," that is, the all-becrushing, or rather the *all-to-nothing-crushing* Kant. In the facility and force of compound epithets, the German from the number of its cases and inflections approaches to the Greek, that language so

"Bless'd in the happy marriage of sweet words."

It is in the woful harshness of its sounds alone that the German need shrink from the comparison.

which he wished to explode.) It is possible, that this predilection, at first merely comparative, deviated for a time into direct partiality. But the real object which he had in view, was, I doubt not, a species of excellence which had been long before most happily characterized by the judicious and amiable Garve, whose works are so justly beloved and esteemed by the Germans, in his remarks on Gellert, from which the following is literally translated. "The talent, that is required in order to make excellent verses, is perhaps greater than the philosopher is ready to admit, or would find it in his power to acquire: the talent to seek only the apt expression of the thought, and yet to find at the same time with it the rhyme and the metre. Gellert possessed this happy gift, if ever any one of our poets possessed it; and nothing perhaps contributed more to the great and universal impression which his fables made on their first publication, or conduces more to their continued popularity. It was a strange and curious phænomenon, and such as in Germany had been previously unheard of, to read verses in which every thing was expressed just as one would wish to talk, and yet all dignified, attractive, and interesting; and all at the same time perfectly correct as to the measure of the syllables and the rhyme. It is certain, that poetry when it has attained this excellence makes a far greater impression than prose. So much so indeed, that even the gratification which the very rhymes afford, becomes then no longer a contemptible or trifling gratification."[2]

However novel this phænomenon may have been in Germany at the time of Gellert, it is by no means

[2] *Sammlung einiger Abhandlungen von Christian Garve.* [Leipzig, 1779, pp. 233-4 with slight alterations. S. C.]

new, nor yet of recent existence in our language. Spite of the licentiousness with which Spenser occasionally compels the orthography of his words into a subservience to his rhymes, the whole FAIRY QUEEN is an almost continued instance of this beauty. Waller's song GO, LOVELY ROSE, is doubtless familiar to most of my readers; but if I had happened to have had by me the Poems of Cotton, more but far less deservedly celebrated as the author of the VIRGIL TRAVESTIED, I should have indulged myself, and I think have gratified many, who are not acquainted with his serious works, by selecting some admirable specimens of this style. There are not a few poems in that volume, replete with every excellence of thought, image, and passion, which we expect or desire in the poetry of the milder muse; and yet so worded, that the reader sees no one reason either in the selection or the order of the words, why he might not have said the very same in an appropriate conversation, and cannot conceive how indeed he could have expressed such thoughts otherwise, without loss or injury to his meaning.[3]

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[3] [Charles Cotton, the poet, was born of a good family in Staffordshire in 1630, died at Westminster in 1687. His Scarronides or Virgil Travestie, a burlesque on the first and fourth books of the Æneid, was printed for the fifteenth time in 1771. The first book was first published in 1664. It seems to have owed its popularity less to its merits than to its piquant demerits, which were infused into it, because, as the author says in the Epilogue to another work in the same style, Burlesque upon Burlesque, (quoted in Sir H. Nicolas's Memoirs,) in the "precious age" in which he lived.

> "Coarse hempen trash was sooner read,
> Than poems of a finer thread,"

and therefore he must

> ——— wisely choose
> To dizen up his dirty muse,

But in truth our language is, and from the first dawn of poetry ever has been, particularly rich in composi-

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In such an odd fantastic weed,
As every one, he knew, would read:"

thus coolly resolving to minister to the worse than levity of his age instead of aiming to correct it. The *Biographie Universelle* affirms that to compare the Virgil Travestie to Hudibras is to compare a caricature to a painting which, though a little overcharged, has a great foundation of truth. He published several prose works beside the Second Part of the Complete Angler. Sir Harris Nicolas observes, that as these "consist almost entirely of translations, and with the exception of Montaigne's Essays, of Memoirs of warriors whose deeds have been eclipsed by modern prowess, it is not surprising that his labours should be forgotten." His volume of Poems on several Occasions was in a sixth edition in 1770.

As a poet Cotton appears to most advantage, when teaching in easy verse and transparent language, a sort of Horatian morality, serious but not ardent or profound, as in his poem called Contentation: or in lively pictures of nature and rustic life, as in his Quatrains on Morning and Noon, on Evening and Night, particularly the two last, which are like Milton's Allegro and Penseroso pitched at a lower key: or in poems of sentiment, as the Ode to Chlorinda: or the sportive Epistle, as that to Bradshaw quarrelling with him for epistolary neglect; or in the picturesque Anacreontic, a fine specimen of which is his Ode entitled Winter. This poem Mr. Wordsworth describes, in his Preface, as "an admirable composition;" and he quotes the latter part of it as "an instance still more happy of Fancy employed in the treatment of feeling than, in the preceding passages, the Poem supplies of her management of forms."

The poems of Cotton have the same moral stain as Herrick's, with not less fancy but a less Arcadian air,—more of the world that *is* about them. The spirit of poetry was indeed on the *way downward* from "great Eliza's golden time" till its reascent into the region of the pure and elevated towards the end of the last century, and a declension may even be observed, I think, from Herrick to Cotton, who came into the world about thirty-nine years later. His poetry, indeed, has more of Charles II.'s time

tions distinguished by this excellence. The final *e*, which is now mute, in Chaucer's age was either sounded

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and less of the Elizabethan period in its manner and spirit than that of Waller, who was but twenty-five years his senior. Cotton writes like a man of this world, who has glimpses now and then of the other; not as if he lived utterly out of sight of it, like the dramatists characterized by C. Lamb. There are more detailed corporeal descriptions in his poetry than in any that I know, of not more than equal extent; descriptions of the youthful body more vividly real than is to be desired, and of the body in age, when it "demands the translucency of mind not to be worse than indifferent" so full of mortality, or, what it grieves us more to contemplate than ashes and the grave, the partial perishing of the natural man while he is yet alive, that they excite an indignant disgust on behalf of our common humanity. That Cotton was "an ardent royalist," appears in many of his poems, and with special vehemence in his denunciation of Waller for his Panegyric upon Cromwell, which exhibits, in its features, all the ugliness, with some of the energy, of anger. If, as is said, the admirer of Saccharissa leant to monarchy in his heart, his poetic genius had a heart of its own, and a far stronger one, which leant another way; for both his poems on Cromwell have vastly more *heart* in them than his poetical address to Charles at the Restoration. And this the King himself, among whose faults want of discernment was not to be reckoned, took care to point out, enjoying, no doubt, the versatile poet's double mortification as much as he would have done the best verses. Cotton should have given Waller a receipt for writing as finely about an hereditary monarch, as about a king of "noble nature's crowning"—a Hero.

Some men are worse upon the whole than they appear in their writings: there is reason to hope that Cotton, though an imprudent, was a better man than might be inferred from the tone of much of his poetry, which probably exaggerates the features of his earthly mind as much as that of many others exalts the heavenly part of them. The persistent friendship of Isaac Walton is a great testimony in his favour, and it might be conjectured, from the internal evidence of his productions in verse, that of all the poets of his day he was the most agreeable com-

or dropt indifferently. We ourselves still use either "beloved" or "belov'd" according as the rhyme, or measure, or the purpose of more or less solemnity may require. Let the reader then only adopt the pronunciation of the poet and of the court, at which he lived, both with respect to the final *e* and to the accentuation of the last syllable: I would then venture to ask, what even in the colloquial language of elegant and unaffected women, (who are the peculiar mistresses of "pure English and undefiled,") what could we hear more natural, or seemingly more unstudied, than the following stanzas from Chaucer's TROILUS AND CRESEIDE.

"And after this forth to the gate he wente,
Ther as Creseide out rode a ful gode pnas,
And up and doun there made he many' a wente,
And to himselfe ful oft he said, Alas!
Fro hennis rode my blisse and my solas:
As wouldè blisful God now for his joie,
I might her sene agen come in to Troie!
And to the yondir hil I gan her gide,
Alas! and there I toke of her my leve:
And yond I saw her to her fathir ride;
For sorow of whiche mine hert shall to-cleve;
And hithir home I came whan it was eve,
And here I dwel, out-cast from allè joie,
And shal, til I maie sene her efte in Troie.

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panion, the least apt to fly above his company though never lagging behind in any conversation.

A memoir of Cotton by Sir Harris Nicolas is prefixed to the beautifully illustrated edition of the Complete Angler of 1836. This edition was published by Mr. Pickering, and, as his friend the Editor declares, is very largely indebted to his taste and exertions and bibliographical knowledge for the value which the volumes possess.

I believe that Mr. Pickering intends to bring out a select edition of the occasional poems of Cotton. S. C.]

"And of himselfe imaginid he ofte
To ben defaitid, pale and woxin lesse
Than he was wonte, and that men saidin softe,
What may it be? who can the sothè gesse,
Why Troilus hath al this hevinesse?
And al this n' as but his melancolie,
That he had of himselfe suche fantasie.
Anothir time imaginin he would
That every wight, that past him by the wey,
Had of him routhe, and that thei saien should,
I am right sory, Troilus wol dey!
And thus he drove a daie yet forth or twey,
As ye have herde: suche life gan he to lede
As he that stode betwixin hope and drede:
For which him likid in his songis shewe
Th' encheson of his wo as he best might,
And made a songe of wordis but a fewe,
Somwhat his woful herté for to light,
And whan he was from every mann'is sight
With softé voice he of his lady dere,
That absent was, gan sing as ye may here:
* * * * * *
This song, when he thus songin had, ful sone
He fil agen into his sighis olde:
And every night, as was his wonte to done;
He stodè the bright moonè to beholde
And all his sorowe to the moone he tolde,
And said: I wis, whan thou art hornid newe,
I shall be glad, if al the world be trewe!"[4]

Another exquisite master of this species of style, where the scholar and the poet supplies the material, but the perfect well-bred gentleman the expressions and the arrangement, is George Herbert. As from

[4] [Boke V. The first lines of the first stanza stand thus in the original:

And aftir this he to the yatis wente

and the first of the last stanza thus:

This songè when he thus songin had[illegible]]

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the nature of the subject, and the too frequent quaintness of the thoughts, his TEMPLE; or SACRED POEMS AND PRIVATE EJACULATIONS are comparatively but little known, I shall extract two poems. The first is a sonnet, equally admirable for the weight, number, and expression of the thoughts, and for the simple dignity of the language. Unless, indeed, a fastidious taste should object to the latter half of the sixth line. The second is a poem of greater length, which I have chosen not only for the present purpose, but likewise as a striking example and illustration of an assertion hazarded in a former page of these sketches: namely, that the characteristic fault of our elder poets is the reverse of that, which distinguishes too many of our more recent versifiers; the one conveying the most fantastic thoughts in the most correct and natural language; the other in the most fantastic language conveying the most trivial thoughts. The latter is a riddle of words; the former an enigma of thoughts. The one reminds me of an odd passage in Drayton's IDEAS:

> As other men, so I myself do muse,
> Why in this sort I wrest invention so;
> And why these *giddy metaphors* I use,
> Leaving the path the greater part do go;
> I will resolve you: *I am lunatic!*[5]

The other recalls a still odder passage in THE SYNAGOGUE: *or* THE SHADOW OF THE TEMPLE, a connected series of poems in imitation of Herbert's TEMPLE, and, in some editions, annexed to it.

> O how my mind
> Is gravell'd!
> Not a thought,
> That I can find,

[5] Sonnet IX.

But's ravell'd
All to nought!
Short ends of threds,
And narrow shreds
Of lists,
Knots, snarled ruffs,
Loose broken tufts
Of twists,
Are my torn meditations ragged clothing,
Which, wound and woven, shape a suit for nothing:
One while I think, and then I am in pain
To think how to unthink that thought again.[6]

Immediately after these burlesque passages I cannot proceed to the extracts promised, without changing the ludicrous tone of feeling by the interposition of the three following stanzas of Herbert's.

VIRTUE.

Sweet day, so cool, so calm, so bright,
The bridal of the earth and sky,
The dew shall weep thy fall to-night;
For thou must die.

Sweet rose, whose hue angry and brave
Bids the rash gazer wipe his eye:
Thy root is ever in its grave,
And thou must die.

Sweet spring, full of sweet days and roses,
A box, where sweets compacted lie:
My music shews, ye have your closes,
And all must die.

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[6] [The Synagogue, a collection of poems generally appended to the Temple, has been retained in Mr. Pickering's edition of 1835. "They were first printed," as the Preface mentions, A. D. 1640, and have been, with much probability, attributed to the Rev. Christopher Harvie, M. A. The poem quoted is at p. 274 of the edit. S. C.]

## THE BOSOM SIN:

A SONNET BY GEORGE HERBERT.

Lord, with what care hast thou begirt us round!
Parents first season us; then schoolmasters
Deliver us to laws; they send us bound
To rules of reason, holy messengers,
Pulpits and Sundays, sorrow dogging sin,
Afflictions sorted, anguish of all sizes,
Fine nets and stratagems to catch us in,
Bibles laid open, millions of surprises;
Blessings beforehand, ties of gratefulness,
The sound of Glory ringing in our ears:
Without, our shame; within, our consciences;
Angels and grace, eternal hopes and fears.
Yet all these fences and their whole array
One cunning bosom-sin blows quite away.

## LOVE UNKNOWN.

Dear friend, sit down, the tale is long and sad:
And in my faintings, I presume, your love
Will more comply than help. A Lord I had,
And have, of whom some grounds, which may improve,
I hold for two lives, and both lives in me.
To him I brought a dish of fruit one day,
And in the middle placed my heart. But he
(I sigh to say)
Look'd on a servant, who did know his eye,
Better than you know me, or (which is one)
Than I myself. The servant instantly,
Quitting the fruit, seiz'd on my heart alone,
And threw it in a font, wherein did fall
A stream of blood, which issued from the side
Of a great rock: I well remember all,
And have good cause: there it was dipt and dyed,
And wash'd, and wrung: the very wringing yet
Enforceth tears. "Your heart was foul, I fear."
Indeed 'tis true. I did and do commit
Many a fault, more than my lease will bear;

Yet still ask'd pardon, and was not denied.
But you shall hear. After my heart was well,
And clean and fair, as I one eventide
(I sigh to tell)
Walk'd by myself abroad, I saw a large
And spacious furnace flaming, and thereon
A boiling caldron, round about whose verge
Was in great letters set AFFLICTION.
The greatness shew'd the owner. So I went
To fetch a sacrifice out of my fold,
Thinking with that, which I did thus present,
To warm his love, which, I did fear, grew cold.
But as my heart did tender it, the man
Who was to take it from me, slipt his hand,
And threw my heart into the scalding pan;
My heart that brought it (do you understand?)
The offerer's heart. "Your heart was hard, I fear."
Indeed 'tis true. I found a callous matter
Began to spread and to expatiate there:
But with a richer drug than scalding water
I bath'd it often, ev'n with holy blood,
Which at a board, while many drank bare wine,
A friend did steal into my cup for good,
Ev'n taken inwardly, and most divine
To supple hardnesses. But at the length
Out of the caldron getting, soon I fled
Unto my house, where to repair the strength
Which I had lost, I hasted to my bed:
But when I thought to sleep out all these faults,
(I sigh to speak)
I found that some had stuff'd the bed with thoughts,
I would say thorns. Dear, could my heart not break,
When with my pleasures ev'n my rest was gone?
Full well I understood who had been there:
For I had given the key to none but one:
It must be he. "Your heart was dull, I fear."
Indeed a slack and sleepy state of mind
Did oft possess me; so that when I pray'd,
Though my lips went, my heart did stay behind.
But all my scores were by another paid,
Who took my guilt upon him. "Truly, Friend,

" For aught I hear, your Master shews to you
" More favour than you wot of. Mark the end.
" The font did only what was old renew:
" The caldron suppled what was grown too hard:
" The thorns did quicken what was grown too dull:
" All did but strive to mend what you had marr'd.
" Wherefore be cheer'd, and praise him to the full
" Each day, each hour, each moment of the week,
" Who fain would have you be new, tender, quick."[7]

## CHAPTER VII.

### *The former subject continued—The neutral style, or that common to Prose and Poetry, exemplified by specimens from Chaucer, Herbert, and others.*

I HAVE no fear in declaring my conviction, that the excellence defined and exemplified in the preceding chapter is not the characteristic excellence of Mr. Wordsworth's style; because I can add with equal sincerity, that it is precluded by higher powers. The praise of uniform adherence to genuine, logical English is undoubtedly his; nay, laying the main emphasis on the word *uniform*, I will dare add that, of all contemporary poets, it is *his alone*. For, in a less absolute sense of the word, I should certainly include Mr. Bowles, Lord Byron, and, as to all his later writings, Mr. Southey, the exceptions in their works being so few and unimportant. But of the specific excellence described in the quotation from

[7] [The three poems are at pp. 87, 40, and 133 respectively. S. C.]

Garve, I appear to find more, and more undoubted specimens in the works of others; for instance, among the minor poems of Mr. Thomas Moore, and of our illustrious Laureate. To me it will always remain a singular and noticeable fact; that a theory, which would establish this *lingua communis*, not only as the best, but as the only commendable style, should have proceeded from a poet, whose diction, next to that of Shakespeare and Milton, appears to me of all others the most *individualized* and characteristic. And let it be remembered too, that I am now interpreting the controverted passages of Mr. Wordsworth's critical preface by the purpose and object, which he may be supposed to have intended, rather than by the sense which the words themselves must convey, if they are taken without this allowance.

A person of any taste, who had but studied three or four of Shakespeare's principal plays, would without the name affixed scarcely fail to recognise as Shakespeare's a quotation from any other play, though but of a few lines. A similar peculiarity, though in a less degree, attends Mr. Wordsworth's style, whenever he speaks in his own person; or whenever, though under a feigned name, it is clear that he himself is still speaking, as in the different *dramatis personæ* of THE RECLUSE. Even in the other poems, in which he purposes to be most dramatic, there are few in which it does not occasionally burst forth. The reader might often address the poet in his own words with reference to the persons introduced:

"It seems, as I retrace the ballad line by line
That but half of it is theirs, and the better half is thine."[1]

[1] [Altered from The Pet Lamb, P. W. p. 80. S. C.]

Who, having been previously acquainted with any considerable portion of Mr. Wordsworth's publications, and having studied them with a full feeling of the author's genius, would not at once claim as Wordsworthian the little poem on the rainbow?

"The Child is father of the Man, &c." [2]

Or in the LUCY GRAY?

"No mate, no comrade Lucy knew;
She dwelt on a wide moor;
*The sweetest thing that ever grew*
*Beside a human door.*" [3]

Or in the IDLE SHEPHERD-BOYS? [4]

"Along the river's stony marge
The sand-lark chants a joyous song;
The thrush is busy in the wood,
And carols loud and strong.
A thousand lambs are on the rocks,
All newly born! both earth and sky
Keep jubilee, and more than all,
Those boys with their green coronal;
They never hear the cry.
That plaintive cry! which up the hill
Comes from the depth of Dungeon-Ghyll."

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[2] P. W. p. 2, line 7.

"My heart leaps up when I behold
A rainbow in the sky;
So was it when my life began;
So is it now I am a man;
So be it when I shall grow old,
Or let me die!
The Child is father of the Man;
And I could wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety." S. C.]

[3] [Ib. I. p. 16. S. C.]

[4] [Ib. I. p. 31. S. C.]

Need I mention the exquisite description of the Sea-Loch in THE BLIND HIGHLAND BOY. Who but a poet tells a tale in such language to the little ones by the fire-side as—

"Yet had he many a restless dream;
Both when he heard the eagle's scream,
And when he heard the torrents roar,
And heard the water beat the shore
Near where their cottage stood.

Beside a lake their cottage stood,
Not small like our's, a peaceful flood;
But one of mighty size, and strange;
That, rough or smooth, is full of change,
And stirring in its bed.

For to this lake, by night and day,
The great Sea-water finds its way
Through long, long windings of the hills,
And drinks up all the pretty rills
And rivers large and strong:

Then hurries back the road it came—
Returns on errand still the same;
This did it when the earth was new;
And this for evermore will do,
As long as earth shall last.

And, with the coming of the tide,
Come boats and ships that sweetly ride,
Between the woods and lofty rocks;
And to the shepherds with their flocks
Bring tales of distant lands."[5]

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[5] [Ib. III. p. 145-6. Mr. Wordsworth has altered "sweetly" in the last stanza to "safely." In the first I venture to prefer "the eagle's scream," which my father wrote, to "the eagles," as it is written by Mr. Wordsworth—because eagles are neither gregarious nor numerous, and the first expression seems to mark the nature of the bird, and to bring it more interestingly before the mind, than the last. S. C.]

I might quote almost the whole of his RUTH,[6] but take the following stanzas:

> " But, as you have before been told,
> This Stripling, sportive, gay, and bold,
> And, with his dancing crest,
> So beautiful, through savage lands
> Had roamed about with vagrant bands
> Of Indians in the West.
>
> The wind, the tempest roaring high,
> The tumult of a tropic sky,
> Might well be dangerous food
> For him, a Youth to whom was given
> So much of earth—so much of heaven,
> And such impetuous blood.
>
> Whatever in those climes he found
> Irregular in sight or sound
> Did to his mind impart
> A kindred impulse, seemed allied
> To his own powers, and justified
> The workings of his heart.
>
> Nor less, to feed voluptuous thought,
> The beauteous forms of nature wrought,
> Fair trees and lovely flowers;
> The breezes their own languor lent;
> The stars had feelings, which they sent
> Into those magic bowers.
>
> Yet in his worst pursuits, I ween,
> That sometimes there did intervene
> Pure hopes of high intent:
> For passions linked to forms so fair
> And stately, needs must have their share
> Of noble sentiment."

But from Mr. Wordsworth's more elevated compo-

[6] [P. W. II. p. 106. S. C.]

sitions, which already form three-fourths of his works; and will, I trust, constitute hereafter a still larger proportion;—from these, whether in rhyme or blank verse, it would be difficult and almost superfluous to select instances of a diction peculiarly his own, of a style which cannot be imitated without its being at once recognised, as originating in Mr. Wordsworth. It would not be easy to open on any one of his loftier strains, that does not contain examples of this; and more in proportion as the lines are more excellent, and most like the author. For those, who may happen to have been less familiar with his writings, I will give three specimens taken with little choice. The first from the lines on the BOY OF WINANDER-MERE,[7]—who

> "Blew mimic hootings to the silent owls,
> That they might answer him.—And they would shout
> Across the watery vale, and shout again,
> With long halloos, and screams, and echoes loud
> Redoubled and redoubled; concourse wild.
> Of mirth and jocund din! And when it chanced,
> That pauses of deep silence mocked his skill,
> *Then sometimes in that silence, while he hung*
> *Listening, a gentle shock of mild surprise*
> *Has carried far into his heart the voice*
> *Of mountain-torrents; or the visible scene*[8]

[7] [There was a Boy. Ib. ib. p. 79. S. C.]

[8] Mr. Wordsworth's having judiciously adopted "*concourse wild*" in this passage for "*a wild scene*" as it stood in the former edition, encourages me to hazard a remark, which I certainly should not have made in the works of a poet less austerely accurate in the use of words, than he is, to his own great honour. It respects the propriety of the word, "*scene*," even in the sentence in which it is retained. Dryden, and he only in his more careless verses, was the first, as far as my researches have discovered, who for the convenience of rhyme used this word in the vague sense, which has been since too current even in our best

*Would enter unawares into his mind*
*With all its solemn imagery, its rocks,*
*Its woods, and that uncertain heaven, received*
*Into the bosom of the steady lake.*" [9]

The second shall be that noble imitation of Dray-

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writers, and which (unfortunately, I think) is given as its first explanation in Dr. Johnson's Dictionary, and therefore would be taken by an incautious reader as its proper sense. In Shakespeare and Milton the word is never used without some clear reference, proper or metaphorical, to the theatre. Thus Milton;

"Cedar, and pine, and fir, and branching palm
A sylvan *scene*; and, as the ranks ascend
Shade above shade, a woody *theatre*
Of stateliest view." *

I object to any extension of its meaning, because the word is already more equivocal than might be wished; inasmuch as in the limited use, which I recommend, it may still signify two different things; namely, the scenery, and the characters and actions presented on the stage during the presence of particular scenes. It can therefore be preserved from obscurity only by keeping the original signification full in the mind. Thus Milton again,

——"Prepare thee for another scene." †

[9] [Part of this poetical description has been altered or expanded, thus;

——— And they would shout
Across the watery vale, and shout again,
Responsive to his call,—with quivering peals,
And long halloos, and screams, and echoes loud
Redoubled and redoubled; concourse wild
Of jocund din! And, when there came a pause
Of silence such as baffled his best skill:
Then, sometimes, in that silence——

I fear it is presumptuous even to express a feeling, which

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* [Par. Lost. iv. l. 139. S. C.]
† [Ib. xi. l. 637. S. C.]

ton[10] (if it was not rather a coincidence) in the lines To JOANNA.[11]

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hardly dares to be an opinion, about these fine verses (one of the most exquisite specimens of blank verse that I know, and fit to be placed beside the most exquisite specimens from Milton, though different from them in the kind of excellence) and yet I cannot forbear to express the feeling, that the latter part of this quotation stood better at first; or that any improvement, —*if any there be*,—in the first of the two altered lines, is dearly purchased by the comparative languor which has thus been occasioned in the second :—

Of silence *such as baffled his best* skill

seems to me almost prose in comparison with

That pauses of deep silence mocked his skill,—

which presents the image, (if so it may be called,) at once without dividing it, while the spondaic movement of the verse corresponds to the sense. Neither can I think that "mirth" is here a superfluity even in addition to "jocund din;" the logic of poetic passion may admit or even require what the mere logic of thought does not exact: and what is the objection to "chanc'd," which Milton uses just in the same way in Paradise Lost?* The utter silence of the owls, after such free and full communications, is as good an instance of *chance*, or an event of which we cannot see the cause, as the affairs of this world commonly present; and the word seems to me particularly expressive. S. C.]

[10] Which Copland scarce had spoke, but quickly every hill,
Upon her verge that stands, the neighbouring vallies fill;
Helvillon from his height, it through the mountains threw,
From whom as soon again, the sound Dunbalrase drew,
From whose stone-trophied head, it on the Wendross went,
Which, tow'rds the sea again, resounded it to Dent.
That Brodwater, therewith within her banks astound,
In sailing to the sea, told it to Egremound,
Whose buildings, walks, and streets, with echoes loud and long,
Did mightily commend old Copland for her song.
Drayton's POLYOLBION: *Song XXX.*

[11] [P. W. II. p. 289. S. C.]

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* Book ix. l. 575.

—" When I had gazed perhaps two minutes' space,
Joanna, looking in my eyes, beheld
That ravishment of mine, and laughed aloud.
The Rock, like something starting from a sleep,
Took up the Lady's voice, and laughed again!
That ancient Woman seated on *Helm-crag*
Was ready with her cavern; *Hammar-scar*,
And the tall Steep of Silver-How sent forth
A noise of laughter; southern Loughrigg heard,
And Fairfield answered with a mountain tone.
Helvellyn far into the clear blue sky
Carried the lady's voice!—old Skiddaw blew
His speaking trumpet!—back out of the clouds
From Glaramara southward came the voice:
And Kirkstone tossed it from his misty head!"

The third, which is in rhyme, I take from the SONG AT THE FEAST OF BROUGHAM CASTLE, upon the restoration of Lord Clifford, the Shepherd, to the Estates and Honours of his Ancestors.[12]

—" Now another day is come,
Fitter hope, and nobler doom;
He hath thrown aside his crook,
And hath buried deep his book;
*Armour rusting in his halls*
*On the blood of Clifford calls;—*
*'Quell the Scot,' exclaims the Lance!*
*Bear me to the heart of France,*
*Is the longing of the Shield—*
*Tell thy name, thou trembling Field!—*
*Field of death, where'er thou be,*
*Groan thou with our victory!*
Happy day, and mighty hour,
When our Shepherd, in his power,
Mailed and horsed, with lance and sword,
To his ancestors restored,
Like a re-appearing Star,
Like a glory from afar,
*First shall head the flock of war!*"

[12] [P. W. II. p. 154. S. C.]

"Alas! the fervent harper did not know,
That for a tranquil Soul the Lay was framed,
Who, long compelled in humble walks to go,
Was softened into feeling, soothed, and tamed.

Love had he found in huts where poor men lie;
His daily teachers had been woods and rills,
*The silence that is in the starry sky,*
*The sleep that is among the lonely hills.*"

The words themselves in the foregoing extracts, are, no doubt, sufficiently common for the greater part.—But in what poem are they not so, if we except a few misadventurous attempts to translate the arts and sciences into verse? In THE EXCURSION the number of polysyllabic (or what the common people call, *dictionary*) words is more than usually great. And so must it needs be, in proportion to the number and variety of an author's conceptions, and his solicitude to express them with precision.—But are those words *in those places* commonly employed in real life to express the same thought or outward thing? Are they the style used in the ordinary intercourse of spoken words? No! nor are the modes of connections; and still less the breaks and transitions. Would any but a poet—at least could any one without being conscious that he had expressed himself with noticeable vivacity—have described a bird singing loud by, "The thrush is *busy* in the wood?"—or have spoken of boys with a string of club-moss round their rusty hats, as the boys "*with their green coronal?*"—or have translated a beautiful May-day into "*Both earth and sky keep jubilee?*"—or have brought all the different marks and circumstances of a sea-loch before the mind, as the actions of a living and acting power? Or have represented the reflection of the sky in the water, as "*That uncertain heaven received into the bosom of*

*the steady lake?*" Even the grammatical construction is not unfrequently peculiar; as "The wind, the tempest roaring high, the tumult of a tropic sky, might well be *dangerous food to him*, a youth to whom was given, &c." There is a peculiarity in the frequent use of the ἀσυνάρτητον (that is, the omission of the connective particle before the last of several words, or several sentences used grammatically as single words, all being in the same case and governing or governed by the same verb) and not less in the construction of words by apposition ("*to him, a youth.*"). In short, were there excluded from Mr. Wordsworth's poetic compositions all, that a literal adherence to the theory of his preface *would* exclude, two thirds at least of the marked beauties of his poetry must be erased. For a far greater number of lines would be sacrificed than in any other recent poet; because the pleasure received from Wordsworth's poems being less derived either from excitement of curiosity or the rapid flow of narration, the *striking* passages form a larger proportion of their value. I do not adduce it as a fair criterion of comparative excellence, nor do I even think it such; but merely as matter of fact. I affirm, that from no contemporary writer could so many lines be quoted, without reference to the poem in which they are found, for their own independent weight or beauty. From the sphere of my own experience I can bring to my recollection three persons of no every-day powers and acquirements, who had read the poems of others with more and more unallayed pleasure, and had thought more highly of their authors, as poets; who yet have confessed to me, that from no modern work had so many passages started up anew in their minds at different times, and as different occasions had awakened a meditative mood.

## CHAPTER VIII.

*Remarks on the present mode of conducting critical journals.*

LONG have I wished to see a fair and philosophical inquisition into the character of Wordsworth, as a poet, on the evidence of his published works; and a positive, not a comparative, appreciation of their *characteristic* excellencies, deficiencies, and defects. I know no claim, that the mere *opinion* of any individual can have to weigh down the opinion of the author himself; against the probability of whose parental partiality we ought to set that of his having thought longer and more deeply on the subject. But I should call that investigation fair and philosophical in which the critic announces and endeavours to establish the principles, which he holds for the foundation of poetry in general, with the specification of these in their application to the different classes of poetry. Having thus prepared his canons of criticism for praise and condemnation, he would proceed to particularize the most striking passages to which he deems them applicable, faithfully noticing the frequent or infrequent recurrence of similar merits or defects, and as faithfully distinguishing what is characteristic from what is accidental, or a mere flagging of the wing. Then if his premises be rational, his deductions legitimate, and his conclusions justly applied, the reader, and possibly the poet himself, may adopt his judgment in the light of judgment and in the independence of

free-agency. If he has erred, he presents his errours in a definite place and tangible form, and holds the torch and guides the way to their detection.

I most willingly admit, and estimate at a high value, the services which the EDINBURGH REVIEW, and others formed afterwards on the same plan, have rendered to society in the diffusion of knowledge. I think the commencement of the EDINBURGH REVIEW an important epoch in periodical criticism; and that it has a claim upon the gratitude of the literary republic, and indeed of the reading public at large, for having originated the scheme of reviewing those books only, which are susceptible and deserving of argumentative criticism. Not less meritorious, and far more faithfully and in general far more ably executed, is their plan of supplying the vacant place of the trash or mediocrity, wisely left to sink into oblivion by its own weight, with original essays on the most interesting subjects of the time, religious, or political; in which the titles of the books or pamphlets prefixed furnish only the name and occasion of the disquisition. I do not arraign the keenness, or asperity of its damnatory style, in and for itself, as long as the author is addressed or treated as the mere impersonation of the work then under trial. I have no quarrel with them on this account, as long as no personal allusions are admitted, and no re-commitment (for new trial) of juvenile performances, that were published, perhaps forgotten, many years before the commencement of the review: since for the forcing back of such works to public notice no motives are easily assignable, but such as are furnished to the critic by his own personal malignity; or what is still worse, by a habit of malignity in the form of mere wantonness.

"No private grudge they need, no personal spite:
The *viva sectio* is its own delight!
All enmity, all envy, they disclaim,
Disinterested thieves of our good name:
Cool, sober murderers of their neighbour's fame!"

S. T. C.

Every censure, every sarcasm respecting a publication which the critic, with the criticised work before him, can make good, is the critic's right. The writer is authorized to reply, but not to complain. Neither can any one prescribe to the critic, how soft or how hard; how friendly, or how bitter, shall be the phrases which he is to select for the expression of such reprehension or ridicule. The critic must know, what effect it is his object to produce; and with a view to this effect must he weigh his words. But as soon as the critic betrays, that he knows more of his author, than the author's publications could have told him; as soon as from this more intimate knowledge, elsewhere obtained, he avails himself of the slightest trait *against* the author; his censure instantly becomes personal injury, his sarcasms personal insults. He ceases to be a critic, and takes on him the most contemptible character to which a rational creature can be degraded, that of a gossip, backbiter, and *pasquillant:* but with this heavy aggravation, that he steals the unquiet, the deforming passions of the world into the museum; into the very place which, next to the chapel and oratory, should be our sanctuary, and secure place of refuge; offers abominations on the altar of the Muses; and makes its sacred paling the very circle in which he conjures up the lying and profane spirit.

This determination of unlicensed personality, and of permitted and legitimate censure, (which I owe

in part to the illustrious Lessing,[1] himself a model of acute, spirited, sometimes stinging, but always argumentative and honourable, criticism) is beyond controversy the true one: and though I would not myself exercise all the rights of the latter, yet, let but the former be excluded, I submit myself to its exercise in the hands of others, without complaint and without resentment.

Let a communication be formed between any number of learned men in the various branches of science and literature; and whether the president and central committee be in London, or Edinburgh, if only they previously lay aside their individuality, and pledge themselves inwardly, as well as ostensibly, to administer judgment according to a constitution and code of laws; and if by grounding this code on the two-fold basis of universal morals and philosophic reason, independent of all foreseen application to particular works and authors, they obtain the right to speak each as the representative of their body corporate; they shall have honour and good wishes from me, and I shall accord to them their fair dignities, though self-assumed, not less cheerfully than if I could inquire concerning them in the herald's office, or turn to them in the book of peerage. However loud may be the outcries for prevented or subverted reputation, however numerous and impatient the complaints of merciless severity and insupportable despotism, I shall neither feel, nor utter aught but to the defence and

[1] [See a few remarks on this subject in Lessing's Preface to his Essay on the manner in which the Ancients represented Death, (*Wie die Alten den Tod gebildet*). Works, Leipzig, 1841, vol. v. pp. 278-4. Lessing also remonstrates against a certain sort of personality in criticism in the Advertisement prefixed to his *Hamburgische Dramaturgie*. Ib. vol. vii. pp. 3-6. S. C.]

justification of the critical machine. Should any literary Quixote find himself provoked by its sounds and regular movements, I should admonish him with Sancho Panza, that it is no giant but a windmill; there it stands on its own place, and its own hillock, never goes out of its way to attack any one, and to none and from none either gives or asks assistance. When the public press has poured in any part of its produce between its mill-stones, it grinds it off, one man's sack the same as another, and with whatever wind may happen to be then blowing. All the two-and-thirty winds are alike its friends. Of the whole wide atmosphere it does not desire a single finger-breadth more than what is necessary for its sails to turn round in. But this space must be left free and unimpeded. Gnats, beetles, wasps, butterflies, and the whole tribe of ephemerals and insignificants, may flit in and out and between; may hum, and buzz, and jarr; may shrill their tiny pipes, and wind their puny horns, unchastised and unnoticed. But idlers and bravadoes of larger size and prouder show must beware, how they place themselves within its sweep. Much less may they presume to lay hands on the sails, the strength of which is neither greater nor less than as the wind is, which drives them round. Whomsoever the remorseless arm slings aloft, or whirls along with it in the air, he has himself alone to blame; though, when the same arm throws him from it, it will more often double than break the force of his fall.

Putting aside the too manifest and too frequent interference of national party, and even personal predilection or aversion; and reserving for deeper feelings those worse and more criminal intrusions into the sacredness of private life, which not seldom merit legal rather than literary chastisement, the two principal

objects and occasions which I find for blame and regret in the conduct of the review in question are: first, its unfaithfulness to its own announced and excellent plan, by subjecting to criticism works neither indecent nor immoral, yet of such trifling importance even in point of size and, according to the critic's own verdict, so devoid of all merit, as must excite in the most candid mind the suspicion, either that dislike or vindictive feelings were at work; or that there was a cold prudential pre-determination to increase the sale of the review by flattering the malignant passions of human nature. That I may not myself become subject to the charge, which I am bringing against others, by an accusation without proof, I refer to the article on Dr. Rennell's sermon in the very first number of the EDINBURGH REVIEW as an illustration of my meaning. If in looking through all the succeeding volumes the reader should find this a solitary instance, I must submit to that painful forfeiture of esteem, which awaits a groundless or exaggerated charge.

The second point of objection belongs to this review only in common with all other works of periodical criticism; at least, it applies in common to the general system of all, whatever exception there may be in favour of particular articles. Or if it attaches to THE EDINBURGH REVIEW, and to its only corrival (THE QUARTERLY), with any peculiar force, this results from the superiority of talent, acquirement, and information which both have so undeniably displayed; and which doubtless deepens the regret though not the blame. I am referring to the substitution of assertion for argument; to the frequency of arbitrary and sometimes petulant verdicts, not seldom unsupported even by a single quotation from the work condemned, which might at least have explained the critic's meaning, if it did not

prove the justice of his sentence. Even where this is not the case, the extracts are too often made without reference to any general grounds or rules from which the faultiness or inadmissibility of the qualities attributed may be deduced; and without any attempt to show, that the qualities *are* attributable to the passage extracted. I have met with such extracts from Mr. Wordsworth's poems, annexed to such assertions, as led me to imagine, that the reviewer, having written his critique before he had read the work, had then *pricked with a pin* for passages, wherewith to illustrate the various branches of his preconceived opinions. By what principle of rational choice can we suppose a critic to have been directed (at least in a Christian country, and himself, we hope, a Christian) who gives the following lines, pourtraying the fervour of solitary devotion excited by the magnificent display of the Almighty's works, as a proof and example of an author's tendency to *downright ravings*, and absolute unintelligibility?

> "O then what soul was his, when on the tops
> Of the high mountains he beheld the sun
> Rise up, and bathe the world in light! He looked—
> Ocean and earth, the solid frame of earth,
> And ocean's liquid mass, beneath him lay
> In gladness and deep joy. The clouds were touched,
> And in their silent faces did he read
> Unutterable love. Sound needed none,
> Nor any *voice* of joy: his spirit drank
> The spectacle! sensation, soul, and form,
> All melted into him; they swallowed up
> His animal being; in them did he live,
> And by them did he live: they were his life."[2]

[2] [Excursion. (Book I. P. W. vi. p. 10. The passage now begins thus:

"Such was the Boy—but for the growing Youth

Can it be expected, that either the author or his admirers, should be induced to pay any serious attention to decisions which prove nothing but the pitiable state of the critic's own taste and sensibility? On opening the review they see a favourite passage, of the force and truth of which they had an intuitive certainty in their own inward experience confirmed, if confirmation it could receive, by the sympathy of their most enlightened friends; some of whom perhaps, even in the world's opinion, hold a higher intellectual rank than the critic himself would presume to claim. And this very passage they find selected, as the characteristic effusion of a mind *deserted by reason!*—as furnishing evidence that the writer was raving, or he could not have thus strung words together without sense or purpose! No diversity of taste seems capable of explaining such a contrast in judgment.

That I had over-rated the merit of a passage or poem, that I had erred concerning the degree of its excellence, I might be easily induced to believe or ap-

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What soul was his, when, from the naked top
Of some bold headland, he beheld &c."

Compare with this Goethe's Sunset, (in the dialogue between Faust and Wagner after the scene of out-door festivity,) the diction and versification of which are exquisite:

*O glücklich! wer noch hoffen kann*
*Aus diesem Meer des Irrthums aufzutauchen.* &c.

The two passages, in each of which the tone of reflection is beautifully accordant with the natural image,—in Goethe's with a setting, as in that from The Excursion, with a rising sun,—might be pendants to each other, and form such a bright pair as Mr. Turner's two pictures called The Rise and Decline of Carthage,—"or brighter." Would that the hues of the material paintings were as fadeless as those of the poetry, for they too deserve to live! S. C.]

prehend. But that lines, the sense of which I had analyzed and found consonant with all the best convictions of my understanding; and the imagery and diction of which had collected round those convictions my noblest as well as my most delightful feelings; that I should admit such lines to be mere nonsense or lunacy, is too much for the most ingenious arguments to effect. But that such a revolution of taste should be brought about by a few broad assertions, seems little less than impossible. On the contrary, it would require an effort of charity not to dismiss the criticism with the aphorism of the wise man, *in animam malevolam sapientia haud intrare potest.*

What then if this very critic should have cited a large number of single lines and even of long paragraphs, which he himself acknowledges to possess eminent and original beauty? What if he himself has owned, that beauties as great are scattered in abundance throughout the whole book? And yet, though under this impression, should have commenced his critique in vulgar exultation with a prophecy meant to secure its own fulfilment? With a "This won't do!" What? if after such acknowledgments extorted from his own judgment he should proceed from charge to charge of tameness and raving; flights and flatness; and at length, consigning the author to the house of incurables, should conclude with a strain of rudest contempt evidently grounded in the distempered state of his own moral associations? Suppose too all this done without a single leading principle established or even announced, and without any one attempt at argumentative deduction, though the poet had presented a more than usual opportunity for it, by having previously made public his own principles of judgment in poetry, and supported them by a connected train of reasoning!

The office and duty of the poet is to select the most dignified as well as

"The gayest, happiest attitude of things."[3]

The reverse, for in all cases a reverse is possible, is the appropriate business of burlesque and travesty, a predominant taste for which has been always deemed a mark of a low and degraded mind. When I was at Rome, among many other visits to the tomb of Julius II. I went thither once with a Prussian artist, a man of genius and great vivacity of feeling. As we were gazing on Michael Angelo's MOSES, our conversation turned on the horns and beard of that stupendous statue; of the necessity of each to support the other; of the super-human effect of the former, and the necessity of the existence of both to give a harmony and integrity both to the image and the feeling excited by it. Conceive them removed, and the statue would become *un*-natural, without being *super*-natural. We called to mind the horns of the rising sun, and I repeated the noble passage from Taylor's HOLY DYING.[4] That horns were the emblem of power and sovereignty among the Eastern nations, and are still retained as such in Abyssinia; the Achelous of the ancient Greeks; and the probable ideas and feelings, that originally suggested the mixture of the human and the brute form in the figure, by which they realized the idea of their mysterious Pan, as representing intelligence blended with a darker power, deeper, mightier, and more universal than the conscious intellect of man; than intelligence;—all these thoughts and recollections passed in procession before our minds. My

[3] [Akenside's Pleasures of Imagination, Bk. I. l. 30. S. C.]
[4] [Chap. I. sect. 3. § 2.]

companion who possessed more than his share of the hatred, which his countrymen bore to the French, had just observed to me, "a Frenchman, Sir! is the only animal in the human shape, that by no possibility can lift itself up to religion or poetry:" when, lo! two French officers of distinction and rank entered the church! "Mark you," whispered the Prussian, "the first thing, which those scoundrels—will notice—(for they will begin by instantly noticing the statue in parts, without one moment's pause of admiration impressed by the whole)—will be the horns and the beard. And the associations, which they will immediately connect with them will be those of a *he-goat* and a *cuckold*." Never did man guess more luckily. Had he inherited a portion of the great legislator's prophetic powers, whose statue we had been contemplating, he could scarcely have uttered words more coincident with the result: for even as he had said, so it came to pass.

In THE EXCURSION the poet has introduced an old man, born in humble but not abject circumstances, who had enjoyed more than usual advantages of education, both from books and from the more awful discipline of nature. This person he represents, as having been driven by the restlessness of fervid feelings, and from a craving intellect to an itinerant life; and as having in consequence passed the larger portion of his time, from earliest manhood, in villages and hamlets from door to door,

"A vagrant Merchant bent beneath his load."[5]

Now whether this be a character appropriate to a lofty

[5] ["A vagrant Merchant under a heavy load
Bent as he moves"—
Book I. P. W. Vol. VI. p. 15. edit. of 1840. S. C.]

didactick poem, is perhaps questionable. It presents a fair subject for controversy; and the question is to be determined by the congruity or incongruity of such a character with what shall be proved to be the essential constituents of poetry. But surely the critic who, passing by all the opportunities which such a mode of life would present to such a man; all the advantages of the liberty of nature, of solitude, and of solitary thought; all the varieties of places and seasons, through which his track had lain, with all the varying imagery they bring with them; and lastly, all the observations of men,

> "Their manners, their enjoyments, and pursuits,
> Their passions and their feelings"——[6]

which the memory of these yearly journeys must have given and recalled to such a mind—the critic, I say, who from the multitude of possible associations should pass by all these in order to fix his attention exclusively on *the pin-papers*, and *stay-tapes*, which *might* have been among the wares of his pack; this critic, in my opinion, cannot be thought to possess a much higher or much healthier state of moral feeling, than the Frenchmen above recorded.

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[6] [Book I. P. W. Vol. vi. p. 15, last edit. S. C.]

## CHAPTER IX.

*The characteristic defects of Wordsworth's poetry, with the principles from which the judgment, that they are defects, is deduced—Their proportion to the beauties—For the greatest part characteristic of his theory only.*

IF Mr. Wordsworth have set forth principles of poetry which his arguments are insufficient to support, let him and those who have adopted his sentiments be set right by the confutation of those arguments, and by the substitution of more philosophical principles. And still let the due credit be given to the portion and importance of the truths, which are blended with his theory; truths, the too exclusive attention to which had occasioned its errors, by tempting him to carry those truths beyond their proper limits. If his mistaken theory have at all influenced his poetic compositions, let the effects be pointed out, and the instances given. But let it likewise be shewn, how far the influence has acted; whether diffusively, or only by starts; whether the number and importance of the poems and passages thus infected be great or trifling compared with the sound portion; and lastly, whether they are inwoven into the texture of his works, or are loose and separable. The result of such a trial would evince beyond a doubt, what it is high time to announce decisively and aloud, that the supposed characteristics of Mr. Wordsworth's poetry,

whether admired or reprobated; whether they are simplicity or simpleness; faithful adherence to essential nature, or wilful selections from human nature of its meanest forms and under the least attractive associations; are as little the real characteristics of his poetry at large, as of his genius and the constitution of his mind.

In a comparatively small number of poems he chose to try an experiment; and this experiment we will suppose to have failed. Yet even in these poems it is impossible not to perceive that the natural tendency of the poet's mind is to great objects and elevated conceptions. The poem intitled FIDELITY[1] is for the greater part written in language, as unraised and naked as any perhaps in the two volumes. Yet take the following stanza and compare it with the preceding stanzas of the same poem.

> "There sometimes doth a leaping fish
> Send through the tarn a lonely cheer;
> The crags repeat the raven's croak,
> In symphony austere;
> Thither the rainbow comes—the cloud—
> And mists that spread the flying shroud;
> And sun-beams; and the sounding blast,
> That, if it could, would hurry past;
> But that enormous barrier holds it fast."

Or compare the four last lines of the concluding stanza with the former half:

> "Yes, proof was plain that, since the day
> On which the Traveller thus had died,
> The Dog had watched about the spot,
> Or by his Master's side:
> *How nourish'd here through such long time*
> *He knows, who gave that love sublime,—*

[1] [P. W. V. p. 43. S. C.]

*And gave that strength of feeling, great*
*Above all human estimate!*" [2]

Can any candid and intelligent mind hesitate in determining, which of these best represents the tendency and native character of the poet's genius? Will he not decide that the one was written because the poet *would* so write, and the other because he could not so entirely repress the force and grandeur of his mind, but that he must in some part or other of every composition write otherwise? In short, that his only disease is the being out of his element; like the swan, that, having amused himself, for a while, with crushing the weeds on the river's bank, soon returns to his own majestic movements on its reflecting and sustaining surface. Let it be observed that I am here supposing the imagined judge, to whom I appeal, to have already decided against the poet's theory, as far as it is different from the principles of the art, generally acknowledged.

I cannot here enter into a detailed examination of Mr. Wordsworth's works; but I will attempt to give the main results of my own judgment, after an acquaintance of many years, and repeated perusals. And though, to appreciate the defects of a great mind it is necessary to understand previously its characteristic excellences, yet I have already expressed myself with sufficient fulness, to preclude most of the ill effects that might arise from my pursuing a contrary arrangement. I will therefore commence with what I deem the prominent *defects* of his poems hitherto published.

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[2] [The second line of this stanza is now

"When this ill-fated Traveller died." S. C.]

The first characteristic, though only occasional defect, which I appear to myself to find in these poems is the *inconstancy* of the style. Under this name I refer to the sudden and unprepared transitions from lines or sentences of peculiar felicity—(at all events striking and original)—to a style, not only unimpassioned but undistinguished. He sinks too often and too abruptly to that style, which I should place in the second division of language, dividing it into the three species; first, that which is peculiar to poetry; second, that which is only proper in prose; and third, the neutral or common to both. There have been works, such as Cowley's Essay on Cromwell,[3] in which prose

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[3] [This is an eloquent declamation against Cromwell, in the guise of an argument, the defence of "the late man, who made himself to be called Protector," being put into the mouth of one whose appearance was "strange and terrible," and whose figure was taller than that of a giant or "the shadow of any giant in the evening." This personage turns out to be the Wicked One himself, and the discourse which he utters is, indeed, most dramatically appropriate to him, however unserviceable to the cause of Cromwell. After despatching the Protector's religion and morals, disparaging his powers, reducing his parts to diligence and dissimulation, and making away with his achievements at home and abroad, or bringing them very nearly to nothing, the Evil One's opponent proceeds to demolish his intellectual pretensions; and here he attacks him on the side of his speeches, which Mr. Carlyle has lately brought forth from the shadows in which they have so long been lying.

According to this essay, all the war and bloodshed at the time of the Rebellion, was on account of "a little ship-money," or to revenge the loss "of three or four ears,"—not to decide whether the country was to be governed by an absolute or a limited monarchy; whether the Church of England should be approximated to Rome or maintained in the spirit of the Reformation; whether ecclesiastical rulers were to fine, scourge, mutilate and immure for life in wretched prisons any who opposed their views and pro-

and verse are intermixed (not as in the Consolation of Boetius,[4] or the ARGENIS of Barclay,[5] by the insertion of poems supposed to have been spoken or composed on occasions previously related in prose, but) the poet passing from one to the other, as the nature of the thoughts or his own feelings dictated. Yet this mode of composition does not satisfy a cultivated taste. There is something unpleasant in the being thus obliged to alternate states of feeling so dissimilar, and this too in a species of writing, the pleasure from which is in part derived from the preparation and previous expectation of the reader. A portion of that awkwardness is felt which hangs upon the introduction of songs in our modern comic operas; and to prevent which the judicious Metastasio (as to whose exquisite taste there can be no hesitation, whatever doubts may

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ceedings, or whether they must learn to uphold the Church in a manner more conformable to Christianity. Yet Cowley, while he thus could represent the cause of Hampden exalts that of Brutus!—whom Dante places for *his* rebellion in the lowest deep of punishment; such is poetical injustice! Methinks this whole discourse against old Noll is like "the shadow of a giant in the evening"—big and black but of no force or substance.

Cowley wrote eleven other discourses by way of essays in verse and prose, ib. p. 79-148. This remarkable writer and worthy man died July 28, 1667, aged forty-nine. S. C.]

[4] [An. Manl. Sever. Boëtii *Consolationis Philosophiæ*, Lib. v. Boëtius or Boëthius was born about A.D. 470. S. C.]

[5] [The Argenis, quoted in vol. i. toward the end of chap. ix. is a sort of didactick romance, in imitation of the *Satyricon of Petronius*. The author, John Barclay, was born 1582, died 1621. He flourished at the Court of James I. (who was delighted with his *Satyricon Euphormionis*)—and published, beside several prose works, a collection of poems in two vols. 4to. It is said that his prose is superiour to his verse, but that all his works discover wit and genius. S. C.]

be entertained as to his poetic genius) uniformly placed the *aria* at the end of the scene, at the same time that he almost always raises and impassions the style of the recitative immediately preceding.[6] Even in real life, the difference is great and evident between words used as the arbitrary marks of thought, our smooth market-coin of intercourse, with the image and superscription worn out by currency; and those which convey pictures either borrowed from one outward object to enliven and particularize some other; or used allegorically to body forth the inward state of the person speaking; or such as are at least the exponents of his peculiar turn and unusual extent of faculty. So much so indeed, that in the social circles of private life we often find a striking use of the latter put a stop to the general flow of conversation, and by the excitement arising from concentred attention produce a sort of damp and interruption for some minutes after. But in the perusal of works of literary art, we prepare ourselves for such language; and the business of the writer, like that of a painter whose subject requires unusual splendour and prominence, is so to raise the

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[6] [The popular Italian dramatic poet, Pietro Metastasio, whose original name was Trapassi, was born at Rome on the 3rd of January, 1698, died April 12th, 1782.

Metastasio, though not born to affluence or gentility was pursued through life by the favours of the rich and powerful, as well as the admiration of the crowd. He was a favourite of Nature in such a way as made him also a favourite of Fortune, and possessed all admirable qualities of mind and person that are understood at first sight. He took the ecclesiastical habit and the title of *Abate*, though his life and writings, so closely connected with the stage, were not much in accordance with the exteriour of a grave spiritual calling. But the Church of Rome has never disdained attractive worldly alliances. S. C.]

lower and neutral tints, that what in a different style would be the commanding colours, are here used as the means of that gentle *degradation* requisite in order to produce the effect of a whole. Where this is not achieved in a poem, the metre merely reminds the reader of his claims in order to disappoint them; and where this defect occurs frequently, his feelings are alternately startled by anticlimax and hyperclimax.

I refer the reader to the exquisite stanzas cited for another purpose from THE BLIND HIGHLAND BOY; and then annex, as being in my opinion instances of this *disharmony* in style, the two following:

> "And one, the rarest, was a shell,
> Which he, poor child, had studied well:
> The shell of a green turtle, thin
> And hollow;—you might sit therein,
> It was so wide, and deep."
>
> "Our Highland Boy oft visited
> The house which held this prize; and, led
> By choice or chance, did thither come
> One day, when no one was at home,
> And found the door unbarred."[7]

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[7] [Mr. Wordsworth has interposed three new stanzas between the first and second of the quotations, and has altered the first thus:

> "The rarest was a turtle-shell
> Which he, poor child, had studied well;
> A shell of ample size and light
> As the pearly car of Amphitrite,
> That sportive dolphins drew."

The history of the Blind Boy's choice of a vessel is now told in nine stanzas,—(beside a tenth at the end of the whole poem) —originally in these three:

> Strong is the current; but be mild,
> Ye waves, and spare the helpless child!

Or page 172, vol. 1.[6]

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If ye in danger fret or chafe,
A bee-hive would be ship as safe
As that in which he sails.

But say what was it? Thought of fear!
Well may ye tremble when ye hear!
—— A Household Tub, *like one of those*
*Which women use to wash their clothes.*
This carried the blind Boy.

Close to the water he had found
This vessel, pushed it from dry ground,
Went into it; and without dread,
Following the fancies in his head,
He paddled up and down.

Vol. II. p. 72-S. edit. 1807.

There are some lovers of poetry, and Mr. Wordsworth's especially, who cannot help preferring these three stanzas to the nine of later date; if the words in italics could be replaced by others less anti-poetic. The advantage of the real incident they think, is that, as being more simple and seeming natural, and capable of being quickly told, it detains the mind but a little while from the main subject of interest: while the other is so peculiar that it claims a good deal of separate attention. The new stanzas are beautiful, but being more ornate than the rest of the poems, they look rather like a piece of decorated architecture introduced into a building in an earlier and simpler style. Such are the whims of certain crazy lovers of the Wordsworthian Muse, who are so loyal to her former self that they sometimes forget the deference due to her at present. S. C.]

[6] [P. W. I. p. 186. Mr. Wordsworth has altered some lines in the fifth stanza of this deeply affecting poem, thus:

'Tis gone—like dreams that we forget:
There was a smile or two—yet—yet
I can remember them, I see, &c.

Smiles hast thou, *bright* ones of thy own;
I cannot keep thee in my arms;
For they confound me;—where—where is
That last, that sweetest smile of his? S. C.]

" 'Tis gone forgotten, *let me do*
*My best.* There was a smile or two—
I can remember them, I see
The smiles worth all the world to me.
Dear Baby! I must lay thee down:
Thou troublest me with strange alarms;
Smiles hast thou, sweet ones of thine own;
I cannot keep thee in my arms;
For they confound me: *as it is,*
I have forgot those smiles of his!"

Or page 269, vol. I.[9]

" Thou hast a nest, for thy love and thy rest,
And though little troubled with sloth
Drunken lark! thou would'st be loth
To be such a traveller as I.
Happy, happy liver!
*With a soul as strong as a mountain river*
*Pouring out praise to th' Almighty giver,*
Joy and jollity be with us both!
Hearing thee or else some other,
As merry a brother
I on the earth will go plodding on
By myself cheerfully till the day is done."

The incongruity, which I appear to find in this passage, is that of the two noble lines in italics with

[9] [P. W. II. p. 29. After

" Joy and jollity be with us both!"

the poem now ends thus:

Alas! my journey, rugged and uneven,
Through prickly moors or dusty ways must wind;
But hearing thee, or others of thy kind,
As full of gladness and as free of heaven,
I, with my fate contented, will plod on,
And hope for higher raptures, when Life's day is done.
S. C.]

the preceding and following. So vol. II. page 30.[10]

> " Close by a Pond, upon the further side,
> He stood alone; a minute's space, I guess,
> I watch'd him, he continuing motionless:
> To the Pool's further margin then I drew;
> He being all the while before me full in view."[11]

Compare this with the repetition of the same image, in the next stanza but two.

> " And, still as I drew near with gentle pace,
> Beside the little pond or moorish flood
> Motionless as a Cloud the Old Man stood,
> That heareth not the loud winds when they call;
> And moveth altogether, if it move at all."

Or lastly, the second of the three following stanzas, compared both with the first and the third.

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[10] [P. W. I. p. 117. The poem is entitled Resolution and Independence, and is sometimes spoken of as The Leech-gatherer.

[11] [Mr. Wordsworth has now done away the original ixth stanza to which these five lines belonged, and concludes the viiith thus:

> Beside a pool bare to the eye of heaven
> I saw a Man before me unawares:
> The oldest man he seemed that ever wore grey hairs.

instead of:

> And I with these untoward thoughts had striven,
> I saw a Man, &c.

Some regret the old conclusion of stanza xiv.

> " He answered me with pleasure and surprize;
> *And there was, while he spake, a fire about his eyes.*"

which now ends thus:

> " Ere he replied, a flash of mild surprize
> Broke from the sable orbs of his yet vivid eyes." S. C.]

" My former thoughts returned; the fear that kills;
And hope that is unwilling to be fed;
Cold, pain, and labour, and all fleshly ills;
And mighty Poets in their misery dead.
But now, perplex'd by what the Old Man had said,
My question eagerly did I renew,
'How is it that you live, and what is it you do?'

He with a smile did then his words repeat;
And said, that, gathering Leeches, far and wide
He travelled; stirring thus about his feet
The waters of the Ponds where they abide.
'Once I could meet with them on every side;
'But they have dwindled long by slow decay;
'Yet still I persevere, and find them where I may.'

While he was talking thus, the lonely place,
The Old Man's shape, and speech, all troubled me:
In my mind's eye I seemed to see him pace
About the weary moors continually,
Wandering about alone and silently."

Indeed this fine poem is especially characteristic of the author. There is scarce a defect or excellence in his writings of which it would not present a specimen. But it would be unjust not to repeat that this defect is only occasional. From a careful reperusal of the two volumes of poems, I doubt whether the objectionable passages would amount in the whole to one hundred lines; not the eighth part of the number of pages. In THE EXCURSION the feeling of incongruity is seldom excited by the diction of any passage considered in itself, but by the sudden superiority of some other passage forming the context.

The second defect I can generalize with tolerable accuracy, if the reader will pardon an uncouth and new coined word. There is, I should say, not seldom a *matter-of-factness* in certain poems. This may be divided into, first, a laborious minuteness and fide-

lity in the representation of objects, and their positions, as they appeared to the poet himself; secondly, the insertion of accidental circumstances, in order to the full explanation of his living characters, their dispositions and actions; which circumstances might be necessary to establish the probability of a statement in real life, where nothing is taken for granted by the hearer; but appear superfluous in poetry, where the reader is willing to believe for his own sake. To this *accidentality* I object, as contravening the essence of poetry, which Aristotle pronounces to be σπουδαιότατον καὶ φιλοσοφώτατον γένος,[12] the most intense, weighty and philosophical product of human art; adding, as the reason, that it is the most catholic and abstract. The following passage from Davenant's prefatory letter to Hobbes well expresses this truth. "When I considered the actions which I meant to describe, (those inferring the persons), I was again persuaded rather to choose those of a former age, than the present; and in a century so far removed, as might preserve me from their improper examinations, who know not the requisites of a poem, nor how much pleasure they lose, (and even the pleasures of heroic poesy are not unprofitable), who take away the liberty of a poet, and fetter his feet in the shackles of an historian." For why should a poet doubt in story to mend the intrigues of fortune by more delightful conveyances of probable fictions, because austere historians have entered into bond to truth? An obligation, which were in poets as foolish and unnecessary, as is the bondage of false martyrs, who lie in chains for a mistaken opinion.

[12] [Διὸ καὶ φιλοσοφώτερον καὶ σπουδαιότερον ποίησις ἱστορίας ἐστίν. ΠΕΡΙ ΠΟΙΗΤΙΚΗΣ. See the quotation, chap. iv. note 4. S. C.]

*But by this I would imply, that truth, narrative and past, is the idol of historians, (who worship a dead thing), and truth operative, and by effects continually alive, is the mistress of poets, who hath not her existence in matter, but in reason.*"[13]

For this minute accuracy in the painting of local imagery, the lines in THE EXCURSION, pp. 96, 97, and 98, may be taken, if not as a striking instance, yet as an illustration of my meaning.[14] It must be some strong motive—(as, for instance, that the description was necessary to the intelligibility of the tale)—which could induce me to describe in a number of verses what a draughtsman could present to the eye with incomparably greater satisfaction by half a dozen strokes of his pencil, or the painter with as many touches of his brush. Such descriptions too often occasion in the mind of a reader, who is determined to understand his author, a feeling of labour, not very dissimilar to that, with which he would construct a diagram, line by line, for a long geometrical proposition. It seems to be like taking the pieces of a dissected map out of its box. We first look at one part, and then at another, then join and dove-tail them; and when the successive acts of attention have been completed, there is a retrogressive effort of mind to behold it as a whole. The poet should paint to the imagination, not to the fancy; and I know no happier case to exemplify the distinction between these two faculties. Master-pieces of the former mode of poetic painting abound in the writings of Milton, for example:

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[13] [From the Preface before Gondibert. To his much honoured friend, Mr. Hobbes, dated Louvre in Paris, Jan. 2, 1650. S. C.]

[14] [Book III. P. W. vi. pp. 78-9. S. C.]

" The fig-tree; not that kind for fruit renown'd,
" But such as at this day, to Indians known,
" In Malabar or Decan spreads her arms
" Branching so broad and long, that in the ground
" The bended twigs take root, *and daughters grow*
" *About the mother tree, a pillar'd shade*
" *High over-arch'd, and* ECHOING WALKS BETWEEN:
" *There oft the Indian herdsman, shunning heat,*
" *Shelters in cool, and tends his pasturing herds*
" *At hoop-holes cut through thickest shade:*"—[15]

This is creation rather than painting, or if painting, yet such, and with such co-presence of the whole picture flashed at once upon the eye, as the sun paints in a camera obscura. But the poet must likewise understand and command what Bacon calls the *vestigia communia* of the senses, the latency of all in each, and more especially as by a magical *penna duplex*, the excitement of vision by sound and the exponents of sound. Thus, " The echoing walks between," may be almost said to reverse the fable in tradition of the head of Memnon, in the Egyptian statue.[16] Such may be deservedly entitled the *creative words* in the world of imagination.

The second division respects an apparent minute

[15] [Par. Lost, Book ix. l. 1101.]

[16] [The Statue of Memnon, one of two statues called Shamy and Damy, which stand at a little distance from Medinet Abou, towards the Nile, looking eastward, directly opposite to the Temple of Luxor, was said to utter a sound like the snapping asunder of a musical string, when it was struck by the first beams of the sun. There is no doubt, that before Cambyses broke this colossus, it uttered sounds when the sun shone on it: the statue is composed of a quartzy sandstone, highly crystallized, containing a considerable portion of iron, and this material, when struck, gives a metallic ring. The excitement of vision by the suggestion of sound is the converse of the excitement of sound by the impulse of light. S. C.]

adherence to *matter-of-fact* in character and incidents; *a biographical* attention to probability, and an *anxiety* of explanation and retrospect. Under this head I shall deliver, with no feigned diffidence, the results of my best reflection on the great point of controversy between Mr. Wordsworth and his objectors; namely, on *the choice of his characters.* I have already declared, and, I trust justified, my utter dissent from the mode of argument which his critics have hitherto employed. To *their* question,—"Why did you chuse such a character, or a character from such a rank of life?"—the poet might in my opinion fairly retort: why with the conception of my character did you make wilful choice of mean or ludicrous associations not furnished by me, but supplied from your own sickly and fastidious feelings? How was it, indeed, probable, that such arguments could have any weight with an author, whose plan, whose guiding principle, and main object it was to attack and subdue that state of association, which leads us to place the chief value on those things on which man differs from man, and to forget or disregard the high dignities, which belong to Human Nature, the sense and the feeling, which may be, and ought to be, found in all ranks? The feelings with which, as Christians, we contemplate a mixed congregation rising or kneeling before their common Maker, Mr. Wordsworth would have us entertain at all times, as men, and as readers; and by the excitement of this lofty, yet prideless impartiality in poetry, he might hope to have encouraged its continuance in real life. The praise of good men be his! In real life, and, I trust, even in my imagination, I honour a virtuous and wise man, without reference to the presence or absence of artificial advantages. Whether in the person of an armed baron, a laurelled bard,

or of an old Pedlar, or still older Leech-gatherer, the same qualities of head and heart must claim the same reverence. And even in poetry I am not conscious, that I have ever suffered my feelings to be disturbed or offended by any thoughts or images, which the poet himself has not presented.

But yet I object, nevertheless, and for the following reasons. First, because the object in view, as an *immediate* object, belongs to the moral philosopher, and would be pursued, not only more appropriately, but in my opinion with far greater probability of success, in sermons or moral essays, than in an elevated poem. It seems, indeed, to destroy the main fundamental distinction, not only between a poem and prose, but even between philosophy and works of fiction, inasmuch as it proposes *truth* for its immediate object, instead of *pleasure*. Now till the blessed time shall come, when truth itself shall be pleasure, and both shall be so united, as to be distinguishable in words only, not in feeling, it will remain the poet's office to proceed upon that state of association, which actually exists as general; instead of attempting first to make it what it ought to be, and then to let the pleasure follow. But here is unfortunately a small *hysteron-proteron*. For the communication of pleasure is the introductory means by which alone the poet must expect to moralize his readers. Secondly: though I were to admit, for a moment, *this* argument to be groundless: yet how is the moral effect to be produced, by merely attaching the name of some low profession to powers which are *least* likely, and to qualities which are assuredly not *more* likely, to be found in it? The Poet, speaking in his own person, may at once delight and improve us by sentiments, which teach us the independence of goodness, of wisdom, and

even of genius, on the favours of fortune. And having made a due reverence before the throne of Antonine, he may bow with equal awe before Epictetus among his fellow-slaves—

> ——————————— "and rejoice
> In the plain presence of his dignity."

Who is not at once delighted and improved, when the Poet Wordsworth himself exclaims,

> "Oh! many are the Poets that are sown
> By Nature; men endowed with highest gifts
> The vision and the faculty divine,
> Yet wanting the accomplishment of verse,
> Nor having e'er, as life advanced, been led
> By circumstance to take unto the height
> The measure of themselves, these favoured Beings,
> All but a scattered few, live out their time,
> Husbanding that which they possess within,
> And go to the grave, unthought of. Strongest minds
> Are often those of whom the noisy world
> Hears least."[17]

To use a colloquial phrase, such sentiments, in such language, do one's heart good; though I for my part, have not the fullest faith in the truth of the observation. On the contrary I believe the instances to be exceedingly rare; and should feel almost as strong an objection to introduce such a character in a poetic fiction, as a pair of black swans on a lake, in a fancy land-scape. When I think how many, and how much better books than Homer, or even than Herodotus, Pindar or Æschylus, could have read, are in the power

[17] [The Excursion, Book I. P. W. vi. p. 10. After "accomplishment of verse" there is a parenthesis of five lines omitted in the extract; the little quotation that occurs just before is from the same place. S. C.]

of almost every man, in a country where almost every man is instructed to read and write; and how restless, how difficultly hidden, the powers of genius are; and yet find even in situations the most favourable, according to Mr. Wordsworth, for the formation of a pure and poetic language; in situations which ensure familiarity with the grandest objects of the imagination; but one Burns, among the shepherds of Scotland, and not a single poet of humble life among those of English lakes and mountains; I conclude, that Poetic Genius is not only a very delicate but a very rare plant.

But be this as it may, the feelings with which,

> "I think of Chatterton, the marvellous Boy,
> The sleepless Soul, that perished in his pride;
> Of Burns, who walk'd in glory and in joy
> Behind his plough, upon the mountain-side"[81]—

are widely different from those with which I should read a *poem*, where the author, having occasion for the character of a poet and a philosopher in the fable of his narration, had chosen to make him a chimney-sweeper; and then, in order to remove all doubts on the subject, had *invented* on account of his birth, parentage and education, with all the strange and fortunate accidents which had concurred in making him at once poet, philosopher, and sweep! Nothing, but biography, can justify this. If it be admissible even in a novel, it must be one in the manner of De Foe's, that were meant to pass for histories, not in the manner of Fielding's: in THE LIFE OF MOLL FLANDERS, or

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[81] ["Of him who walked in glory and in joy
Following his plough, along the mountain side:"—
P. W. II. p. 119. S. C.]

COLONEL JACK, not in a TOM JONES or even a JOSEPH ANDREWS. Much less then can it be legitimately introduced in a poem, the characters of which, amid the strongest individualization, must still remain representative. The precepts of Horace, on this point, are grounded on the nature both of poetry and of the human mind.[19] They are not more peremptory, than wise and prudent. For in the first place a deviation from them perplexes the reader's feelings, and all the circumstances which are feigned in order to make such accidents less improbable, divide and disquiet his faith, rather than aid and support it. Spite of all attempts, the fiction will appear, and unfortunately not as fictitious but as false. The reader not only knows, that the sentiments and language are the poet's own, and his own too in his artificial character, as poet; but by the fruitless endeavours to make him think the contrary, he is not even suffered to forget it. The

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[19] [There are many precepts in Horace *De Arte Poetica* that bear on this subject, as those on congruity at the beginning, and those on giving suitable attributes to every character, and duly regarding the exemplar of life and manners, v. 309-18; but none, I think, that forbids the choice of too peculiar a subject, except so far as this is implied in the condemnation of what *appears* improbable.

*Ficta voluptatis causa, sint proxima veris:*
*Ne, quodcunque volet, poscat sibi fabula credi.* v. 338.

Mr. Coleridge's observation on *laborious fidelity in representations*, and an *anxiety of explanation and retrospect*, are supported, in a general way, by those lines of Horace:

Semper ad eventum festinat, et in medias res,
Non secus ac notas, auditorem rapit: et quæ
Desperat tractata nitescere posse, relinquit.
v. 148. S. C.]

effect is similar to that produced by an Epic Poet, when the fable and the characters are *derived* from Scripture history, as in THE MESSIAH OF KLOPSTOCK, or in CUMBERLAND'S CALVARY:[20] and not merely

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[20] [This Epic is written in blank verse, and is a studied imitation of Milton. In its best passages, as the Assembling of the Devils, in the first book, it is but a mocking-bird strain, with scarce a note in it of native music; and generally where the Poem is not tame it borders on the burlesque. The dispute in B. VII. between Satan and Death, who, rather unnaturally, refuses to harbour his old father, and is informed, as it appears, in reward of this conduct, that he may live till the end of the world, seems to have been written in order to serve as a foil to Milton's grand episode of Satan's encounter with his "fair Son" at the gates of Hell:—it brings our moral and metaphysical ideas into such an odd sort of conflict and confusion. By comparing the two, we see clearly how little this allegorical subject supports itself; how soon it sinks into the ridiculous in unequal hands; how completely its sublimity in those of Milton is the result of consummate skill and high poetic genius. Perhaps too it may be questioned whether the author has not too much interfered with the Scriptural representations of Death by making him turn out mild and amiable, and oppose himself to the great Enemy. Revelation, as Lessing observes in his Essay on this subject, has made him the "king of terrors," the awful offspring of Sin, and the dread way to its punishment; though to the imagination of the ancient Heathen world, Greek or Etrurian, he was a youthful Genius—the twin brother of Sleep—or a lusty boy with a torch held downward. But the accomplished author of The Choleric Man has dramatized him as freely as if he were but a Jack Nightshade; although he avers that there is "very little of the audacity of fancy in the composition of Calvary."

The poem shews want of judgment, if not audacity, in another way also. Of all subjects in the wide range of thought the Death of Christ is that which Fiction should approach most warily. Milton left it untouched. The "narrow basis" of the Paradise Regained seems to me one of the numberless proofs of

*suggested* by it as in the PARADISE LOST of Milton. That illusion, contradistinguished from delusion, that negative faith, which simply permits the images presented to work by their own force, without either denial or affirmation of their real existence by the judgment, is rendered impossible by their immediate neighbourhood to words and facts of known and absolute truth. A faith, which transcends even historic belief, must absolutely *put out* this mere poetic *analogon* of faith, as the summer sun is said to extinguish our household fires, when it shines full upon them. What

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the mighty master's judgment; the whole poem is comprised within the limits of that passage of our Lord's history, which is least defined in Holy Writ,—the sojourn in the wilderness, —and could best bear to have an invention grafted into it. To bring angels and devils, not mentioned in the Scripture narrative of the Death and Passion, around the cross or into any sort of connection with it, either in foreground or background, that narrative being so full as it is of actual facts and particulars, is to jar, if not absolutely to shock, the feelings of most readers. When fanciful fiction is brought so near to sacred history of the most definite character, we recoil, and feel as if the former, clashed with the latter, and was broken against it, like the china vase against the vessel of iron. This collision the plan of Cumberland's poem involved, and poets of greater genius than he, in an enterprise of like nature, have but failed, I think, more splendidly. The author of Calvary thought himself well off, because he had so much fine subject ready to his hand. It was just that which ruined him. He had not capital enough to invest in such an undertaking; for the more is given, in this way, to the poet, the more is required out of his own brain, for the ποιησις, which must be made with materials furnished by himself, whatever he adopts for the *foundation* matter. A man may even take from various places a certain amount of material ready wrought, as Milton did, and yet add that, in the using of it, which makes the *result* entirely his own. S. C.]

would otherwise have been yielded to as pleasing fiction, is repelled as revolting falsehood. The effect produced in this latter case by the solemn belief of the reader, is in a less degree brought about in the instances, to which I have been objecting, by the baffled attempts of the author to *make* him believe.

Add to all the foregoing the seeming uselessness both of the project and of the anecdotes from which it is to derive support. Is there one word for instance, attributed to the pedlar in THE EXCURSION, characteristic of a *Pedlar?* One sentiment, that might not more plausibly, even without the aid of any previous explanation, have proceeded from any wise and beneficent old man, of a rank or profession in which the language of learning and refinement are natural and to be expected? Need the rank have been at all particularized, where nothing follows which the knowledge of that rank is to explain or illustrate? When on the contrary this information renders the man's language, feelings, sentiments, and information a riddle, which must itself be solved by episodes of anecdote? Finally when this, and this alone, could have induced a genuine Poet to inweave in a poem of the loftiest style, and on subjects the loftiest and of most universal interest, such minute matters of fact, (not unlike those furnished for the obituary of a magazine by the friends of some obscure "ornament of society lately deceased" in some obscure town,) as

> "Among the hills of Athol he was born:
> There, on a small hereditary Farm,
> An unproductive slip of rugged ground,
> His Father dwelt; and died in poverty;
> While He, whose lowly fortune I retrace,
> The youngest of three sons, was yet a babe,
> A little One—unconscious of their loss.
> But ere he had outgrown his infant days

His widowed Mother, for a second Mate,
Espoused the teacher of the Village School;
Who on her offspring zealously bestowed
Needful instruction."

"From his sixth year, the Boy of whom I speak,
In summer, tended cattle on the Hills;
But, through the inclement and the perilous days
Of long-continuing winter, he repaired
To his Step-father's School,"—&c.[21]

For all the admirable passages interposed in this narration, might, with trifling alterations, have been far more appropriately, and with far greater verisimilitude, told of a poet in the character of a poet; and without incurring another defect which I shall now mention, and a sufficient illustration of which will have been here anticipated.

Third; an undue predilection for the *dramatic* form in certain poems, from which one or other of two evils result. Either the thoughts and diction are different from that of the poet, and then there arises an incongruity of style; or they are the same and indistinguishable, and then it presents a species of ventriloquism, where two are represented as talking, while in truth one man only speaks.

The fourth class of defects is closely connected with the former; but yet are such as arise likewise from

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[21] [Book I. P. W. vi. p. 7. The first three lines of the first passage are now alone retained. The story of the Step-father is left out, and the narrative proceeds thus:

"His parents, with their numerous offspring, dwelt:
"A virtuous household," &c.

In the next paragraph the fifth line now is

"Equipped with satchel, to a school, that stood," &c.

S. C.]

an intensity of feeling disproportionate to such knowledge and value of the objects described, as can be fairly anticipated of men in general, even of the most cultivated classes; and with which therefore few only, and those few particularly circumstanced, can be supposed to sympathize: In this class, I comprise occasional prolixity, repetition, and an eddying, instead of progression, of thought. As instances, see pages 27, 28, and 62 of the Poems, Vol. I.[22] and the first eighty lines of the VI. th Book of THE EXCURSION.[23]

Fifth and last; thoughts and images too great for the subject. This is an approximation to what might be called mental bombast, as distinguished from verbal: for, as in the latter there is a disproportion of the

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[22] [The anecdote for Fathers: stanzas 4-13. Two of these stanzas are now condensed into one, and a new one is added. P. 62 in vol. i. is a blank. Probably Mr. C. referred to the same page in vol. ii., which contains Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle, from the *line*

O'er whom such thankful tears were shed

to

When Falcons were abroad for prey.

I have heard my father object to the paragraph

Alas when evil men are strong,

I believe on account of its too much retarding the impassioned flow of the poem, and thus injuring its general effect, though the passage is beautiful in itself and in harmony with the rest.

The transitions and vicissitudes in this noble Lyric I have always thought rendered it one of the finest specimens of modern subjective poetry which our age has seen. The ode commences in a tone of high gratulation and festivity—a tone not only glad but *comparatively* even jocund and lighthearted. The Clifford is restored to the home, the honours and estates of his ancestors. Then it sinks and falls away to the remembrance of tribulation—times of war and bloodshed, flight and terror, and hiding away from the enemy—times of poverty and distress, when the Clifford was brought, a little child, to the shelter of a

expressions to the thoughts so in this there is a disproportion of thought to the circumstance and occasion. This, by the bye, is a fault of which none but a man of genius is capable. It is the awkwardness and strength of Hercules with the distaff of Omphale.

It is a well known fact, that bright colours in motion both make and leave the strongest impressions on the eye. Nothing is more likely too, than that a vivid image or visual *spectrum*, thus originated, may become the link of association in recalling the feelings and images that had accompanied the original impression. But if we describe this in such lines, as

> "They flash upon that inward eye,
> Which is the bliss of solitude!"

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northern valley. After a while it emerges from those depths of sorrow—gradually rises into a strain of elevated tranquillity and contemplative rapture; through the power of imagination, the beautiful and impressive aspects of nature are brought into relationship with the spirit of him, whose fortunes and character form the subject of the piece, and are represented as gladdening and exalting it, whilst they keep it *pure and unspotted from the world*. Suddenly the Poet is carried on with greater animation and passion:—he has returned to the point whence he started —flung himself back into the tide of stirring life and moving events. All is to come over again, struggle and conflict, chances and changes of war, victory and triumph, overthrow and desolation. I know nothing, in lyric poetry, more beautiful or affecting than the final transition from this part of the ode, with its rapid metre, to the slow elegiac stanzas at the end, when from the warlike fervour and eagerness, the jubilant menacing strain which has just been described, the Poet passes back into the sublime silence of Nature, gathering amid her deep and quiet bosom a more subdued and solemn tenderness than he had manifested before:—it is as if from the heights of the imaginative intellect his spirit had retreated into the recesses of a profoundly thoughtful Christian heart. S. C.]

[23] [P. W. VI. pp. 205-8—as far as "genuine fruits." S. C.]

in what words shall we describe the joy of retrospection, when the images and virtuous actions of a whole well-spent life, pass before that conscience which is indeed the *inward* eye: which is indeed "*the bliss of solitude?*" Assuredly we seem to sink most abruptly, not to say burlesquely, and almost as in a medley, from this couplet to—

> "And then my heart with pleasure fills,
> And dances with the *daffodils.*"[24] Vol. I. p. 328.

The second instance is from Vol. II. page 12,[25]

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[24] [I wandered lonely. P. W. II. p. 93. And yet the true poetic heart "with pleasure fills" in reading or remembering this sweet poem. How poetry multiplies bright images like a thousand-fold kaleidoscope—for how many "inward eyes" have those daffodils danced and fluttered in the breeze, the waves dancing beside them! S. C.]

[25] [Gipsies. P. W. II. p. 105. These lines are in themselves very grand. The last three are now replaced thus:

> "Oh better wrong and strife
> (By nature transient) than this torpid life;
> Life which the very stars reprove
> As on their silent tasks they move!
> Yet, witness all that stirs in heaven or earth!
> In scorn I speak not; they are what their birth
> And breeding suffer them to be:
> Wild outcasts of society."

I hope it is not mere *poetic* partiality, regardless of morality, that makes so many readers regret the sublime conciseness of the original conclusion.

> "Oh better wrong and strife!
> Better vain deeds or evil than such life!"

if unexplained, might pass for a strong figure of speech, the like to which might be shewn both in sacred and profane writings. Thus in the Blind Highland Boy the Poet exclaims

where the poet having gone out for a day's tour of pleasure, meets early in the morning with a knot of Gipsies, who had pitched their blanket-tents and straw-

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"And let him, let him go his way!"

though his way was probably to destruction, in order to express with vivacity the special Providence that seems to watch over the "forlorn unfortunate," who are innocent like this poor sightless voyager.

Some may object that the Gipsies *have* tasks of their own, such as Mr. Wordsworth himself has beautifully described in the two following stanzas of his Female Vagrant, a poem which has much of the peculiar pathos of Crabbe conveyed in a more deeply poetical medium than that very interesting and powerful writer was able to adopt. I say more *deeply* poetical, for I see a great deal of true poetry in Crabbe's productions, pitched in a grave key accordant with the nature of his thoughts.

Rough potters seemed they, trading soberly
With panniered asses driven from door to door;
But life of happier sort set forth to me,
And other joys my fancy to allure;
The bag-pipe dinning on the midnight moor,
In barn uplighted; and companions boon
Well met from far with revelry secure,
Among the forest glades, while jocund June
Rolled fast along the sky his warm and genial moon.

But ill they suited me—those journeys dark
O'er moor and mountain, midnight theft to hatch!
To charm the surly house-dog's faithful bark,
Or hang on tip-toe at the lifted latch.
The gloomy lantern and the dim blue match,
The black disguise, the warning whistle shrill,
And ear still busy on its nightly watch,
Were not for me brought up in nothing ill:
Besides on griefs so fresh my thoughts were brooding still.

But these are the irregular doings of men too idle and undisciplined for regular employment, and do but confirm the Poet's sentence upon them as taskless loiterers. S. C.]

beds, together with their children and asses, in some field by the road-side. At the close of the day on his return our tourist found them in the same place. "Twelve hours," says he,

> "Twelve hours, twelve bounteous hours are gone, while I
> Have been a traveller under open sky,
> Much witnessing of change and cheer,
> Yet as I left I find them here!"

Whereat the poet, without seeming to reflect that the poor tawny wanderers might probably have been tramping for weeks together through road and lane, over moor and mountain, and consequently must have been right glad to rest themselves, their children and cattle, for one whole day; and overlooking the obvious truth, that such repose might be quite as necessary for them, as a walk of the same continuance was pleasing or healthful for the more fortunate poet; expresses his indignation in a series of lines, the diction and imagery of which would have been rather above, than below the mark, had they been applied to the immense empire of China inprogressive for thirty centuries:

> "The weary Sun betook himself to rest;—
> —Then issued Vesper from the fulgent west,
> Outshining, like a visible God,
> The glorious path in which he trod.
> And now, ascending, after one dark hour,
> And one night's diminution of her power,
> Behold the mighty Moon! this way
> She looks, as if at them—but they
> Regard not her:—oh, better wrong and strife,
> Better vain deeds or evil than such life!
> The silent Heavens have goings on:
> The stars have tasks?—but *these* have none!"

The last instance of this defect, (for I know no other than these already cited) is from the Ode, page

351. Vol. II.[26] where, speaking of a child, "a six year's Darling of a pigmy size," he thus addresses him:

> "Thou best Philosopher, who yet dost keep
> Thy heritage, thou Eye among the blind,
> That, deaf and silent, read'st the eternal deep,
> Haunted for ever by the Eternal Mind,—
> Mighty Prophet! Seer blest!
> On whom those truths do rest,
> Which we are toiling all our lives to find!
> Thou, over whom thy Immortality
> Broods like the Day, a Master o'er a Slave,
> A Presence which is not to be put by!"

Now here, not to stop at the daring spirit of metaphor which connects the epithets "deaf and silent," with the apostrophized *eye:* or (if we are to refer it to the preceding word, "Philosopher"), the faulty and equivocal syntax of the passage; and without examining the propriety of making a "Master *brood* o'er a Slave," or "the *Day*" brood *at all;* we will merely ask, what does all this mean? In what sense is a child of that age a *Philosopher?* In what sense does he *read* "the eternal deep?" In what sense is he declared to be "*for ever haunted*" by the Supreme Being? or so inspired as to deserve the splendid titles of a *Mighty Prophet*, a *blessed Seer?* By reflection? by knowledge? by conscious intuition? or by *any* form or modification of consciousness? These would be tidings indeed; but such as would pre-suppose an immediate revelation to the inspired communicator, and require miracles to authenticate his inspiration. Children at this age give us no such information of themselves; and at what time were we

[26] [Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood. P. W. V. 337.

dipped in the Lethe, which has produced such utter oblivion of a state so godlike? There are many of us that still possess some remembrances, more or less distinct, respecting themselves at six years old; pity that the worthless straws only should float, while treasures, compared with which all the mines of Golconda and Mexico were but straws, should be absorbed by some unknown gulf into some unknown abyss.

But if this be too wild and exorbitant to be suspected as having been the poet's meaning; if these mysterious gifts, faculties, and operations, are not accompanied with consciousness; who else is conscious of them? or how can it be called the child, if it be no part of the child's conscious being? For aught I know, the thinking Spirit within me may be *substantially* one with the principle of life, and of vital operation. For aught I know, it may be employed as a secondary agent in the marvellous organization and organic movements of my body. But, surely, it would be strange language to say, that *I* construct my *heart!* or that *I* propel the finer influences through my *nerves!* or that *I* compress my brain, and draw the curtains of sleep round my own eyes! Spinoza and Behmen were, on different systems, both Pantheists; and among the ancients there were philosophers, teachers of the ΕΝ ΚΑΙ ΠΑΝ, who not only taught that God was All, but that this All constituted God. Yet not even these would confound the *part*, *as* a part, with the whole, *as* the whole. Nay, in no system is the distinction between the individual and God, between the Modification, and the one only Substance, more sharply drawn, than in that of Spinoza. Jacobi[27] indeed relates of Lessing, that, after a conversation with him at

[27] [Fr. H. Jacobi was born at Düsseldorf in 1743, was Presi-

the house of the Poet, Gleim, (the Tyrtæus and Anacreon of the German Parnassus,) in which conversation Lessing had avowed privately to Jacobi his reluctance to admit any *personal* existence of the Supreme Being, or the *possibility* of personality except in a finite Intellect, and while they were sitting at table, a shower of rain came on unexpectedly. Gleim expressed his regret at the circumstance, because they had meant to drink their wine in the garden: upon which Lessing in one of his half-earnest, half-joking moods, nodded to Jacobi, and said, "It is *I*, perhaps, that am doing *that*," i. e. *raining!*—and Jacobi answered, "or perhaps I;" Gleim contented himself with staring at them both, without asking for any explanation.

So with regard to this passage. In what sense can the magnificent attributes, above quoted, be appropriated to a *child*, which would not make them equally suitable to a *bee*, or a *dog*, or *a field of corn;* or even to a ship, or to the wind and waves that propel it? The omnipresent Spirit works equally in them, as in

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dent of the Academy of Sciences at Munich from 1804, died March 16, 1819.

He wrote upon Spinoza and against Menddosohn, on Realism and Idealism, on the Undertaking of Criticism to convert Reason into the Understanding, and other works of metaphysical controversy. His complete works in 5 vols. 8vo. Leipzig, 1812-1822, include his celebrated philosophical romances. Cousin's Manuel, vol. ii. pp. 330-331, Note. Gleim died in 1803, at the age of eighty-four. Taylor says of him: "Gleim had a loving heart, a house always open to literary guests, and a passion for corresponding with all his acquaintance, especially with young men of letters, in whom he anticipated rising genius. His scrutoire has been edited; and it abounds with complaints that his friends are less fond of writing useless epistles than himself, and were one by one letting drop an intercourse, which amused his leisure, but interrupted their industry. Klopstock and Kleist were among his favourite correspondents." S. C.]

the child; and the child is equally unconscious of it as they. It cannot surely be, that the four lines, immediately following, are to contain the explanation?

> "To whom the grave
> Is but a lonely bed without the sense or sight
> Of day or the warm light,
> A place of thought where we in waiting lie;"—[28]

Surely, it cannot be that this wonder-rousing apostrophe is but a comment on the little poem, "We are Seven?"[29]—that the whole meaning of the passage is reducible to the assertion, that a child, who by the bye at six years old would have been better instructed in most Christian families, has no other notion of death than that of lying in a dark, cold place? And still, I hope, not as *in a place of thought!* not the frightful notion of lying *awake* in his grave! The analogy between death and sleep is too simple, too natural, to render so horrid a belief possible for children; even had they not been in the habit, as all Christian children are, of hearing the latter term used to express the former. But if the child's belief be only, that "he is not dead, but sleepeth:" wherein does it differ from that of his father and mother, or any other adult and instructed person? To form an idea of a thing's becoming nothing; or of nothing becoming a thing; is impossible to all finite beings alike, of whatever age, and however educated or uneducated. Thus it is with splendid paradoxes in general. If the words are taken in the common sense, they convey an absurdity; and

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[28] [These lines are now omitted; after the line

"Which we are toiling all our lives to find"

we now read,

"In darkness lost, the darkness of the grave." S. C.]

[29] [P. W. I. p. 19. S. C.]

if, in contempt of dictionaries and custom, they are so interpreted as to avoid the absurdity, the meaning dwindles into some bald truism. Thus you must at once understand the words *contrary* to their common import, in order to arrive at any *sense;* and *according* to their common import, if you are to receive from them any feeling of *sublimity* or *admiration.*

Though the instances of this defect in Mr. Wordsworth's poems are so few, that for themselves it would have been scarcely just to attract the reader's attention toward them; yet I have dwelt on it, and perhaps the more for this very reason. For being so very few, they cannot sensibly detract from the reputation of an author, who is even characterized by the number of profound truths in his writings, which will stand the severest analysis; and yet few as they are, they are exactly those passages which his *blind* admirers would be most likely, and best able, to imitate. But Wordsworth, where he is indeed Wordsworth, may be mimicked by copyists, he may be plundered by plagiarists; but he can not be imitated, except by those who are not born to be imitators. For without his depth of feeling and his imaginative power his *sense* would want its vital warmth and peculiarity; and without his strong sense, his *mysticism* would become *sickly*—mere fog, and dimness!

To these defects which, as appears by the extracts, are only occasional, I may oppose, with far less fear of encountering the dissent of any candid and intelligent reader, the following (for the most part correspondent) excellencies. First, an austere purity of language both grammatically and logically; in short a perfect appropriateness of the words to the meaning. Of how high value I deem this, and how particularly estimable I hold the example at the present day, has been already

stated: and in part too the reasons on which I ground both the moral and intellectual importance of habituating ourselves to a strict accuracy of expression. It is noticeable, how limited an acquaintance with the master-pieces of art will suffice to form a correct and even a sensitive taste, where none but master-pieces have been seen and admired: while on the other hand, the most correct notions, and the widest acquaintance with the works of excellence of all ages and countries, will not perfectly secure us against the contagious familiarity with the far more numerous offspring of tastelessness or of a perverted taste. If this be the case, as it notoriously is, with the arts of music and painting, much more difficult will it be, to avoid the infection of multiplied and daily examples in the practice of an art, which uses words, and words only, as its instruments. In poetry, in which every line, every phrase, may pass the ordeal of deliberation and deliberate choice, it is possible, and barely possible, to attain that *ultimatum* which I have ventured to propose as the infallible test of a blameless style; namely; its *untranslatableness* in words of the same language without injury to the meaning. Be it observed, however, that I include in the *meaning* of a word not only its correspondent object, but likewise all the associations which it recalls. For language is framed to convey not the object alone, but likewise the character, mood and intentions of the person who is representing it. In poetry it *is* practicable to preserve the diction uncorrupted by the affectations and misappropriations, which promiscuous authorship, and reading not promiscuous only because it is disproportionally most conversant with the compositions of the day, have rendered general. Yet even to the poet, composing in his own province, it is an arduous work:

and as the result and pledge of a watchful good sense, of fine and luminous distinction, and of complete self-possession, may justly claim all the honour which belongs to an attainment equally difficult and valuable, and the more valuable for being rare. It is at *all* times the proper food of the understanding; but, in an age of corrupt eloquence it is both food and antidote.

In prose I doubt whether it be even possible to preserve our style wholly unalloyed by the vicious phraseology which meets us every where, from the sermon to the newspaper, from the harangue of the legislator to the speech from the convivial chair, announcing a *toast* or sentiment. Our chains rattle, even while we are complaining of them. The poems of Boetius rise high in our estimation when we compare them with those of his contemporaries, as Sidonius Apollinaris,[30] and others. They might even be referred to a purer age, but that the prose, in which they are set, as jewels in a crown of lead or iron, betrays the true age of the writer. Much however may be effected by education. I believe not only from grounds of reason, but from having in great measure assured myself of the fact by actual though limited experience, that, to a youth led from his first boyhood to investigate the meaning of every word and the reason of its choice and position, logic presents itself as an old acquaintance under new names.

On some future occasion, more especially demanding such disquisition, I shall attempt to prove the close connection between veracity and habits of mental accuracy; the beneficial after-effects of verbal precision in the preclusion of fanaticism, which masters the feel-

[30] [Sidonius Apollinaris was a Christian writer born A. D. 430, author of Letters and Poems. S. C.]

ings more especially by indistinct watch-words; and to display the advantages which language alone, at least which language with incomparably greater ease and certainty than any other means, presents to the instructor of impressing modes of intellectual energy so constantly, so imperceptibly, and as it were by such elements and atoms, as to secure in due time the formation of a second nature. When we reflect, that the cultivation of the judgment is a positive command of the moral law, since the reason can give the *principle* alone, and the conscience bears witness only to the *motive*, while the application and effects must depend on the judgment: when we consider, that the greater part of our success and comfort in life depends on distinguishing the similar from the same, that which is peculiar in each thing from that which it has in common with others, so as still to select the most probable, instead of the merely possible or positively unfit, we shall learn to value earnestly and with a practical seriousness a mean, already prepared for us by nature and society, of teaching the young mind to think well and wisely by the same unremembered process and with the same never forgotten results, as those by which it is taught to speak and converse. Now how much warmer the interest is, how much more genial the feelings of reality and practicability, and thence how much stronger the impulses to imitation are, which a *contemporary* writer, and especially a contemporary *poet*, excites in youth and commencing manhood, has been treated of in the earlier pages of these sketches. I have only to add, that all the praise which is due to the exertion of such influence for a purpose so important, joined with that which must be claimed for the infrequency of the same excellence in the same perfection, belongs in full right to Mr.

Wordsworth. I am far however from denying that we have poets whose *general* style possesses the same excellence, as Mr. Moore, Lord Byron, Mr. Bowles, and, in all his later and more important works, our laurel-honouring Laureate. But there are none, in whose works I do not appear to myself to find *more* exceptions, than in those of Wordsworth. Quotations or specimens would here be wholly out of place, and must be left for the critic who doubts and would invalidate the justice of this eulogy so applied.

The second characteristic excellence of Mr. Wordsworth's works is: a correspondent weight and sanity of the Thoughts and Sentiments,—won, not from books; but—from the poet's own meditative observation. They are *fresh* and have the dew upon them. His muse, at least when in her strength of wing, and when she hovers aloft in her proper element,

> Makes audible a linked lay of truth,
> Of truth profound a sweet continuous lay,
> Not learnt, but native, her own natural notes![31]

Even throughout his smaller poems there is scarcely one, which is not rendered valuable by some just and original reflection.

See page 25, vol. ii:[32] or the two following passages in one of his humblest compositions.

> "O Reader! had you in your mind
> Such stores as silent thought can bring,
> O gentle Reader! you would find
> A tale in every thing."

and

> "I've heard of hearts unkind, kind deeds
> With coldness still returning;

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[31] [Coleridge's Poet. Works, vol. i. p. 208. S. C.]

[32] [Star-Gazers, stanzas 3—6. P. W. II. p. 98. S. C.]

Alas! the gratitude of men
Has oftener left *me* mourning."[33]

or in a still higher strain the six beautiful quatrains, page 134.

"Thus fares it still in our decay:
And yet the wiser mind
Mourns less for what age takes away
Than what it leaves behind.

The Blackbird in the summer trees,
The Lark upon the hill,
Let loose their carols when they please,
Are quiet when they will.

With Nature never do *they* wage
A foolish strife; they see
A happy youth, and their old age
Is beautiful and free!

But we are pressed by heavy laws;
And often, glad no more,
We wear a face of joy, because
We have been glad of yore.

If there is one, who need bemoan
His kindred laid in earth,
The household hearts that were his own,
It is the man of mirth.

My days, my Friend, are almost gone,
My life has been approved,
And many love me; but by none
Am I enough beloved."[34]

or the sonnet on Buonaparte, page 202, vol. ii;[35] or

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[33] [Simon Lee. P. W. V. p. 17. S. C.]

[34] [The Fountain. P. W. V. p. 34-5. S. C.]

[35] [Sonnets dedicated to Liberty. Part I. Sonnet IV. P. W. III. p. 178.

I grieved for Buonaparte, with a vain
And an unthinking grief! for who aspires

finally (for a volume would scarce suffice to exhaust the instances,) the last stanza of the poem on the withered Celandine, vol. ii. p. 312.[36]

"To be a Prodigal's Favorite—then, worse truth,
A Miser's Pensioner—behold our lot!
O Man! that from thy fair and shining youth
Age might but take the things Youth needed not."

Both in respect of this and of the former excellence, Mr. Wordsworth strikingly resembles Samuel Daniel, one of the golden writers of our golden Elizabethan age, now most causelessly neglected: Samuel Daniel, whose diction bears no mark of time, no distinction of age, which has been, and as long as our language shall last, will be so far the language of the to-day and for ever, as that it is more intelligible to us, than the transitory fashions of our own particular age. A similar praise is due to his sentiments. No frequency of perusal can deprive them of their freshness. For though they are brought into the full day-light of every reader's comprehension; yet are they drawn up from depths which few in any age are privileged to visit,

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To genuine greatness but from just desires
And knowledge such as *He* could never gain?
'Tis not in battles that from youth we train
The Governor who must be wise and good,
And temper with the sternness of the brain
Thoughts motherly, and weak as womanhood.
Wisdom doth live with children round her knees:
Books, leisure, perfect freedom, and the talk
Man holds with week-day man in the hourly walk
Of the mind's business: these are the degrees
By which true Sway doth mount; this is the stalk
True Power doth grow on; and her rights are there.

The third and fourth lines and part of the second are now a little altered. S. C.]

[36] [The Small Celandine. P. W. V. p. 294. S. C.]

into which few in any age have courage or inclination to descend. If Mr. Wordsworth is not equally with Daniel alike intelligible to all readers of average understanding in all passages of his works, the comparative difficulty does not arise from the greater impurity of the ore, but from the nature and uses of the metal. A poem is not necessarily obscure, because it does not aim to be popular. It is enough, if a work be perspicuous to those for whom it is written, and

> "Fit audience find, though few."

To the "Ode on the Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of early Childhood" the poet might have prefixed the lines which Dante addresses to one of his own Canzoni—

> "Canzone, i' credo, che saranno radi
> Color, che tua ragione intendan bene,
> Tanto lor sei faticoso ed alto."[37]
>
> "O lyric song, there will be few, think I,
> Who may thy import understand aright:
> Thou art for *them* so arduous and so high!"

But the ode was intended for such readers only as had been accustomed to watch the flux and reflux of their inmost nature, to venture at times into the twilight realms of consciousness, and to feel a deep interest in modes of inmost being, to which they know that the attributes of time and space are inapplicable and alien, but which yet can not be conveyed, save in symbols of time and space. For such readers the sense is sufficiently plain, and they will be as little disposed to charge Mr. Wordsworth with believing the Platonic pre-existence in the ordinary interpretation of

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[37] [*Canzoni Morali*, lib. iv. Canz. i. *Tanto lor parli faticoso e forte* is the original third line. S. C.]

the words, as I am to believe, that Plato himself ever meant or taught it.

Πολλά ὅι ὑπ' ἀγκῶ-
νος ὠκέα βέλη
ἔνδον ἐντὶ φαρέτρας
φωνᾶντα συνετοῖσιν· ἐς
δὲ τὸ πὰν ἑρμηνέων
χατίζει. σοφὸς ὁ πολ-
λα εἰδὼς φυᾷ·
μαθόντες δὲ λάβροι
παγγλωσσίᾳ, κόρακες ὥς,
ἄκραντα γαρύετον
Διὸς πρὸς ὄρνιχα θεῖον.[38]

Third (and wherein he soars far above Daniel) the sinewy strength and originality of single lines and paragraphs: the frequent *curiosa felicitas* of his diction, of which I need not here give specimens, having anticipated them in a preceding page. This beauty, and as eminently characteristic of Wordsworth's poetry, his rudest assailants have felt themselves compelled to acknowledge and admire.

Fourth; the perfect truth of nature in his images and descriptions as taken immediately from nature, and proving a long and genial intimacy with the very spirit which gives the physiognomic expression to all

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[38] [Olymp. II. v. 150.

Beneath mine elbow a full quiver lies
Of fleetest arrows; sounding to the wise;
But for the crowd they need interpreters.
His skill is most who learns in Nature's school;
All else, expert by rule,
Are none of her's;
Mere tongues in vehement gabble idly heard,
Clamouring, like daws, at Jove's celestial bird.

This is one of the good passages of Mr. Cary's translations of Pindar. S. C.]

the works of nature. Like a green field reflected in a calm and perfectly transparent lake, the image is distinguished from the reality only by its greater softness and lustre. Like the moisture or the polish on a pebble, genius neither distorts nor false-colours its objects; but on the contrary brings out many a vein and many a tint, which escape the eye of common observation, thus raising to the rank of gems what had been often kicked away by the hurrying foot of the traveller on the dusty high road of custom.

Let me refer to the whole description of skating, vol. I. page 42 to 47,[39] especially to the lines

> " So through the darkness and the cold we flew,
> And not a voice was idle: with the din
> Meanwhile the precipices rang aloud;
> The leafless trees and every icy crag
> Tinkled like iron; while the distant hills
> Into the tumult sent an alien sound
> Of melancholy, not unnoticed, while the stars,
> Eastward, were sparkling clear, and in the west
> The orange sky of evening died away."

Or to the poem on THE GREEN LINNET, vol. I. p. 244.[40] What can be more accurate yet more lovely than the two concluding stanzas?

> " Upon yon tuft of hazel trees,
> That twinkle to the gusty breeze,
> Behold him perched in ecstasies,
> Yet seeming still to hover;
> There! where the flutter of his wings
> Upon his back and body flings
> Shadows and sunny glimmerings,
> That cover him all over.

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[39] [Influence of Natural Objects. P. W. I. p. 38. S. C.]

[40] [P. W. II. p. 27. The last stanza is now a little altered. S. C.]

While thus before my eyes he gleams,
A Brother of the Leaves he seems;
When in a moment forth he teems
His little song in gushes:
As if it pleased him to disdain
And mock the Form which he did feign,
While he was dancing with the train
Of Leaves among the bushes."

Or the description of the blue-cap, and of the noon-tide silence, p. 284;[41] or the poem to the cuckoo,

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[41] [P. W. II. p. 71.

Where is he that giddy Sprite
Blue-cap, with his colours bright,
Who was blest as bird could be,
Feeding in the apple-tree;
Made such wanton spoil and rout,
Turning blossoms inside out;
Hung with head towards the ground,
Fluttered, perched, into a round
Bound himself and then unbound;
Lithest, gaudiest Harlequin!
Prettiest Tumbler ever seen!
Light of heart, and light of limb,
What is now become of Him?
Lambs, that through the mountains went
Frisking, bleating merriment,
When the year was in its prime,
They are sobered by this time.
If you look to vale or hill,
If you listen, all is still,
Save a little neighbouring Rill,
That from out the rocky ground
Strikes a solitary sound.
Vainly glitters hill and plain,
And the air is calm in vain!
Vainly Morning spreads the lure
Of a sky serene and pure;
Creature none can she decoy
Into open sign of joy:

p. 299;[42] or, lastly, though I might multiply the references to ten times the number, to the poem, so completely Wordsworth's, commencing

"Three years she grew in sun and shower"—[43]

Fifth: a meditative pathos, a union of deep and subtle thought with sensibility; a sympathy with man as man; the sympathy indeed of a contemplator, rather than a fellow-sufferer or co-mate, (*spectator, haud particeps*) but of a contemplator, from whose view no difference of rank conceals the sameness of the nature;

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Is it that they have a fear
Of the dreary season near?
Or that other pleasures be
Sweeter even than gaiety?" S. C.]

[42] [P. W. II. p. 81.]

[43] [Lucy. P. W. II. p. 91. This poem contains those most beautiful stanzas

She shall be sportive as the fawn
That wild with glee across the lawn
Or up the mountain springs;
And her's shall be the breathing balm,
And her's the silence and the calm
Of mute insensate things.

The floating clouds their state shall lend
To her; for her the willow bend;
Nor shall she fail to see
Even in the motions of the storm
Grace that shall mould the maiden's form
By silent sympathy.

The stars of midnight shall be dear
To her; and she shall lean her ear
In many a secret place
Where rivulets dance their wayward round,
And beauty born of murmuring sound
Shall pass into her face. S. C.]

no injuries of wind or weather, of toil, or even of ignorance, wholly disguise the human face divine. The superscription and the image of the Creator still remain legible to *him* under the dark lines, with which guilt or calamity had cancelled or cross-barred it. Here the Man and the Poet lose and find themselves in each other, the one as glorified, the latter as substantiated. In this mild and philosophic pathos, Wordsworth appears to me without a compeer. Such as he *is:* so he *writes.* See vol. I. page 134 to 136,[44] or that most affecting composition, THE AFFICTION OF MARGARET ——— OF ———,[45] page 165 to 168, which no mother, and, if I may judge by my own experience, no parent can read without a tear. Or turn to that genuine lyric, in the former edition, entitled, THE MAD MOTHER,[46] page 174 to 178, of which I cannot

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[44] ['Tis said, that some have died for love. P. W. I. p. 154. Amongst the Poems founded on the Affections is one called, from its first line, "I travelled among unknown men," which ends with these lines, wherein the poet addresses his native land:

Thy mornings showed, thy nights concealed
The bowers where Lucy played;
And thine too is the last green field
That Lucy's eyes surveyed.

A friend, a true poet himself, to whom I owe some new insight into the merits of Mr. Wordsworth's poetry, and who showed me, to my surprise, that there were nooks in that rich and varied region, some of the shy treasures of which I was not perfectly acquainted with, first made me feel the great beauty of this stanza; in which the Poet, as it were, *spreads day and night* over the object of his affections, and seems, under the influence of passionate feeling, to think of England, whether in light or darkness, only as her play-place and verdant home. S. C.]

[45] [The Affliction of Margaret. P. W. I. p. 177. S. C.]

[46] [Her eyes are wild. P. W. I. p. 256. S. C.

refrain from quoting two of the stanzas, both of them for their pathos, and the former for the fine transition in the two concluding lines of the stanza, so expressive of that deranged state, in which, from the increased sensibility, the sufferer's attention is abruptly drawn off by every trifle, and in the same instant plucked back again by the one despotic thought, bringing home with it, by the blending, *fusing* power of Imagination and Passion, the alien object to which it had been so abruptly diverted, no longer an alien but an ally and an inmate.

"Suck, little babe, oh suck again!
It cools my blood; it cools my brain;
Thy lips, I feel them, baby! they
Draw from my heart the pain away.
Oh! press me with thy little hand;
It loosens something at my chest;
About that tight and deadly band
I feel thy little fingers prest.
The breeze I see is in the tree!
It comes to cool my babe and me."

"Thy father cares not for my breast,
'Tis thine, sweet baby, there to rest;
'Tis all thine own!—and, if its hue
Be changed, that was so fair to view,
'Tis fair enough for thee, my dove!
My beauty, little child, is flown,
But thou wilt live with me in love;
And what if my poor cheek be brown?
'Tis well for me, thou canst not see
How pale and wan it else would be."[47]

Last, and pre-eminently I challenge for this poet the gift of Imagination in the highest and strictest

[47] ["Meditative pathos," "the union of subtle thought with sensibility," is highly manifested in a poem among those On the Naming of Places, entitled "When to the attractions of the

sense of the word. In the play of *fancy*, Wordsworth, to my feelings, is not always graceful, and sometimes recondite. The *likeness* is occasionally too strange, or demands too peculiar a point of view, or is such as appears the creature of predetermined research, rather than spontaneous presentation. Indeed his fancy seldom displays itself, as mere and unmodified fancy.[48] But in imaginative power, he stands nearest of all modern writers to Shakespeare and Milton; and yet

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busy world." The last paragraph contains those lines of marked expression

> —— Even so didst thou become
> A *silent* poet; from the solitude
> Of the vast sea didst bring a watchful heart
> Still couchant, an inevitable ear,
> And an eye practised like a blind man's touch.
>
> P. W. II. p. 301.

The speech of Francis to his sister in Canto II. of The White Doe, especially from the lines

> For thee, for thee, is left the sense
> Of trial past without offence
> To God or man.

is a beautiful and lofty strain, breathing, amid deep pathos, a spiritual elevation, for which *dignity* seems a poor word. S. C.]

[48] [How true this is! The *Fancy* in Mr. Wordsworth's poems I feel disposed, in my own mind, to resign to my Father's stricture; it is rather like the miniature painting of one who has been accustomed to a bold style in crayons. But most of the poems, placed by the author himself under the head of Fancy, are superficially *fanciful* but internally far more. *The Green Linnet* derives its charm from the exquisite description of the bird, and the feeling conveyed through him, of vernal rapture—of "the music and the bloom, And all the mighty ravishment of Spring." In the little poem *To a Sexton*, Fancy does but flit, like a swallow, over a depth of human tenderness. Stanzas VIII. and IX. of *The Oak and Broom* contain a lovely natural description. The first poem *To the Daisy* is full of sweet sentiment, reminding one a little of Burns. The poems to the Celandine

in a kind perfectly unborrowed and his own. To employ his own words, which are at once an instance and an illustration, he does indeed to all thoughts and to all objects—

> " ——————————add the gleam,
> The light that never was, on sea or land,
> The consecration, and the Poet's dream." [49]

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abound in happy expressions and images. What *truth* of nature poetically exhibited is there in this stanza!

> Ere a leaf is on a bush,
> In the time before the thrush
> Has a thought about her nest,
> Thou wilt come with half a call,
> Spreading out thy glossy breast
> Like a careless Prodigal;
> Telling tales about the sun
> When we've little warmth or none.

Of all common flowers the small celandine is the most burnished: it seems as if the Sun had enclosed a bit of gold in its cup when he sent it forward as his harbinger. In the poems *To a Skylark* and *The Danish Boy* the general conception seems to me imaginative, though the particulars in each case are instances of Fancy. To call up that "spirit of Noon-day," to clothe him with the attributes of Spring and of Day-time, and by an exquisite *metathesis* to invest his habitation,—the "lovely dell" in which "he walks alone,"—with the spirituality of his presence, was surely the work of imagination; no mere effort of memory, or of the associative power alone, for the result of the whole is something which acts upon the mind "like a new existence." (See Mr. Wordsworth's Preface to the edit. of 1815. P. W. p. xxviii.) This poem seems to illustrate the joint action of Fancy and Imagination. The mere "aggregation or association" of images,—that *part* of the process, in any example, however, upon the whole, imaginative,—my Father would, I suppose, have assigned to Fancy; for how otherwise can we define her office? But this operation may be carried on, more or less, in subservience to the higher law of poetic creation, as it seems to me to be in The Danish Boy. S. C.]

[49] [From Elegiac Stanzas. P. W. V. p. 311. S. C.]

I shall select a few examples as most obviously manifesting this faculty; but if I should ever be fortunate enough to render my analysis of Imagination, its origin and characters, thoroughly intelligible to the reader, he will scarcely open on a page of this poet's works without recognising, more or less, the presence and the influences of this faculty.

From the poem on the YEW TREES,[50] vol. i. page 303, 304.

> "But worthier still of note
> Are those fraternal Four of Borrowdale,
> Joined in one solemn and capacious grove;
> Huge trunks!—and each particular trunk a growth
> Of intertwisted fibres serpentine
> Up-coiling, and inveterately convolved;
> Not uninformed with phantasy, and looks
> That threaten the profane;—a pillared shade,
> Upon whose grassless floor of red-brown hue,
> By sheddings from the pinal umbrage tinged[51]
> Perennially—beneath whose sable roof
> Of boughs, as if for festal purpose, decked
> With unrejoicing berries—ghostly shapes
> May meet at noontide; FEAR and trembling HOPE,
> SILENCE and FORESIGHT; DEATH, the Skeleton,
> And TIME, the Shadow; there to celebrate,
> As in a natural temple scattered o'er
> With altars undisturbed of mossy stone,
> United worship; or in mute repose
> To lie, and listen to the mountain flood
> Murmuring from Glazamara's inmost caves."

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[50] [From Yew Trees. P. W. II. p. 84. S. C.]

[51] ["*Pining* umbrage" in all the editions. I have left my Father's substitution, as a curious instance of a possible different reading. "Piny shade" and "piny verdure" we read of in the poets; but "pinal" I believe is new. *Pining*, which has quite a different sense, is doubtless still better; but perhaps my Father's ear shrunk from it after the word "*sheddings*" at the beginning of the line. S. C.]

The effect of the old man's figure in the poem of RESOLUTION AND INDEPENDENCE, vol. ii. page 33.

> "While he was talking thus, the lonely place,
> The Old Man's shape, and speech, all troubled me:
> In my mind's eye I seemed to see him pace
> About the weary moors continually,
> Wandering about alone and silently."[52]

Or the 8th, 9th, 19th, 26th, 31st, and 33d, in the collection of miscellaneous sonnets[53]—the sonnet on the subjugation of Switzerland, page 210,[54] or the last

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[52] [P. W. II. p. 123. Stanza xix. S. C.]

[53] ["Where lies the Land." Ib. III. p. 33. "Even as a Dragon's Eye," p. 66. "O Mountain Stream!" iv. p. 20. "Earth has not anything to shew more fair," iii. p. 78. "Methought I saw the footsteps of a throne," p. 30. "It is a beauteous Evening—calm and free." (Now—"Air sleeps,—from strife or stir the clouds are free,") p. 32. S. C.]

[54] ["Two voices are there." Ib. ib. p. 186.

The Sonnet "I heard (alas! 'twas only in a dream)" III. p. 47. is a beautiful companion to "Methought I saw." I have sometimes amused myself with finding this sort of cognateness or companionable character amongst the sonnets of Mr. Wordsworth; as we play with a wreath of gems, placing them in many different lights and positions for the gratification of the eye, so playing with these jewels of poetry I have coupled the splendid sonnet "Fair Star of Evening," p. 176, with that *composed on Westminster bridge*, p. 178;—"Two voices are there," ib. p. 186, with "Once did she hold the gorgeous earth in fee," ib. p. 180;—"The world is too much with us," ib. p. 35, with "I watch and long have watched," ib. p. 46;—and, not to trouble the reader with the whole of my match-making fancies, "It is not to be thought of," ib. p. 190, or "When I have borne in memory," ib. p. 191. with that truly majestic one,

> —Inland, within a hollow vale, I stood: ib. p. 185.

which begins with such a quiet gravity, and flows on so naturally into the excess of solemn grandeur. My father quoted this noble sonnet in The Friend, when it first appeared, but

ode, from which I especially select the two following stanzas or paragraphs, page 349 to 350.[55]

> "Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:
> The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,
> Hath had elsewhere its setting,
> And cometh from afar.
> Not in entire forgetfulness,
> And not in utter nakedness,
> But trailing clouds of glory do we come
> From God, who is our home:
> Heaven lies about us in our infancy!
> Shades of the prison-house begin to close
> Upon the growing Boy;
> But He beholds the light, and whence it flows,
> He sees it in his joy!
> The Youth who daily further from the East
> Must travel, still is Nature's Priest,
> And by the vision splendid
> Is on his way attended;
> At length the Man perceives it die away,
> And fade into the light of common day."

And page 352 to 354 of the same ode.[56]

> "O joy! that in our embers
> Is something that doth live,
> That nature yet remembers
> What was so fugitive!

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the *Public* of 1809 cared little for The Friend and its philosophy, or for the strains of the great philosophic Poet. Mr. Wordsworth's sonnets have been collected and published separately in one vol. by Moxon, 1838. The finest *set*, in my opinion, is Part I. of those dedicated to Liberty. (P. W. III. p. 175-200.) The three sonnets to Sleep, ib. pp. 14, 15, 16, and the four on Personal Talk, ib. pp. 39, 40, 41, 42, are very beautiful and peculiar; not Miltonic or Shakespearian, or Petrarchian; nor like the productions of any later sonneteers; but entirely Wordsworthian and inimitable. S. C.]

[55] [P. W. V. p. 340. S. C.]

[56] [Ib. ib. pp. 342-4. S. C.]

The thought of our past years in me doth breed
Perpetual benedictions: not indeed
For that which is most worthy to be blest;
Delight and liberty, the simple creed
Of Childhood, whether busy or at rest,
With new-fledged hope still fluttering in his breast:—
Not for these I raise
The song of thanks and praise;
But for those obstinate questionings
Of sense and outward things,
Fallings from us, vanishings;
Blank misgivings of a Creature
Moving about in worlds not realized,
High instincts, before which our mortal Nature
Did tremble like a guilty Thing surprised!
But for those first affections,
Those shadowy recollections,
Which, be they what they may,
Are yet the fountain light of all our day,
Are yet a master light of all our seeing;
Uphold us—cherish—and have power to make
Our noisy years seem moments in the being
Of the eternal Silence; truths that wake
To perish never;
Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavour,
Nor Man nor Boy,
Nor all that is at enmity with joy,
Can utterly abolish or destroy!
Hence, in a season of calm weather,
Though inland far we be,
Our Souls have sight of that immortal sea
Which brought us hither;
Can in a moment travel thither,—
And see the Children sport upon the shore,
And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore."

And since it would be unfair to conclude with an extract, which, though highly characteristic, must yet, from the nature of the thoughts and the subject, be interesting or perhaps intelligible, to but a limited number of readers; I will add, from the poet's last published

work, a passage equally Wordsworthian; of the beauty of which, and of the imaginative power displayed therein, there can be but one opinion, and one feeling. See White Doe, page 5.[57]

"Fast the church-yard fills;—anon
Look again and they all are gone;
The cluster round the porch, and the folk
Who sate in the shade of the Prior's Oak!
And scarcely have they disappeared
Ere the prelusive hymn is heard:—
With one consent the people rejoice,
Filling the church with a lofty voice!
They sing a service which they feel:
For 'tis the sun-rise now of zeal;
And faith and hope are in their prime
In great Eliza's golden time."

"A moment ends the fervent din,
And all is hushed, without and within;
For though the priest, more tranquilly,
Recites the holy liturgy,
The only voice which you can hear
Is the river murmuring near.
—When soft!—the dusky trees between,
And down the path through the open green,
Where is no living thing to be seen;
And through yon gateway, where is found,
Beneath the arch with ivy bound,
Free entrance to the church-yard ground—
And right across the verdant sod,
Towards the very house of God;
Comes gliding in with lovely gleam,
Comes gliding in serene and slow,
Soft and silent as a dream,
A solitary Doe!
White she is as lily of June,
And beauteous as the silver moon.

[57] [P. W. IV. pp. 48-50. There are now two or three slight alterations. S. C. J.

When out of sight the clouds are driven
And she is left alone in heaven!
Or like a ship some gentle day
In sunshine sailing far away—
A glittering ship that hath the plain
Of ocean for her own domain."
* * * * * *

" What harmonious pensive changes
Wait upon her as she ranges
Round and through this Pile of state
Overthrown and desolate!
Now a step or two her way
Is through space of open day,
Where the enamoured sunny light
Brightens her that was so bright;
Now doth a delicate shadow fall,
Falls upon her like a breath,
From some lofty arch or wall,
As she passes underneath."

The following analogy will, I am apprehensive, appear dim and fantastic, but in reading Bartram's Travels I could not help transcribing the following lines as a sort of allegory, or connected simile and metaphor of Wordsworth's intellect and genius.—" The soil is a deep, rich, dark mould, on a deep stratum of tenacious clay; and that on a foundation of rocks, which often break through both strata, lifting their backs above the surface.[58] The trees which chiefly grow here are the gigantic, black oak; magnolia grandi-flora; fraximus excelsior; platane; and a few stately tulip trees." What Mr. Wordsworth *will* produce, it is not for me

[58] [Travels through North and South Carolina &c. and the Cherokee country, &c., by W. Bartram, 1792, p. 36. At p. 397 of this book Mr. Wordsworth may have found his authority for the strawberry gathering of the Cherokee girls spoken of in Ruth. " He told of girls—a happy out!" &c. S. C.]

to prophesy: but I could pronounce with the liveliest convictions what he is capable of producing. It is the FIRST GENUINE PHILOSOPHIC POEM.[59]

The preceding criticism will not, I am aware, avail to overcome the prejudices of those, who have made it a business to attack and ridicule Mr. Wordsworth's compositions.

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[59] [Mr. Coleridge has spoken of "the poem so completely Wordsworth's commencing

Three years she grew in sun and shower."

It is indeed exquisitely Wordsworthian, and there are many others of our great poet which, like this, some in an equal degree, are characterized by a most transparent diction which holds, as in a crystal shrine, a subtle strain of thought and feeling, that seems so intimately united with the peculiar words in which it is uttered as to be almost one with them. Such are the Lines To H. C. six years old. The Highland Girl, She was a Phantom of delight, and others.

Due honour is done to Peter Bell, at this time, by students of poetry in general, but some, even of Mr. Wordsworth's greatest admirers, do not quite satisfy me in their admiration of The Waggoner, a poem which my dear uncle, Mr. Southey, preferred even to the former. *Ich will meine Denkungsart hierin niemanden aufdringen*, as Lessing says: I will force my way of thinking on nobody, but take the liberty, for my own gratification, to express it. The sketches of hill and valley in this poem have a lightness and spirit,—an Allegro touch,—distinguishing them from the grave and elevated splendour which characterizes Mr. Wordsworth's representations of Nature in general, and from the pensive tenderness of those in The White Doe, while it harmonizes well with the human interest of the piece: indeed it is the harmonious sweetness of the composition which is most dwelt upon by its special admirers. In its course it describes, with bold brief touches, the striking mountain tract from Grasmere to Keswick; it commences with an evening storm among the mountains, presents a lively interior of a country inn during midnight, and concludes after bringing us in sight of St. John's Vale and the Vale of Keswick seen by day-break—"Skiddaw

Truth and prudence might be imaged as concentric circles. The poet may perhaps have passed beyond the latter, but he has confined himself far within the bounds of the former, in designating these critics, as "too petulant to be passive to a genuine poet, and too feeble to grapple with him;***men of palsied imaginations, in whose minds all healthy action is languid;*** who, therefore, feed as the many direct them, or with the many are greedy after vicious provocatives."[60]

So much for the detractors from Wordsworth's merits. On the other hand, much as I might wish

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touched with rosy light," and the prospect from Nathdale Fell "hoar with the frost-like dews of dawn": thus giving a beautiful and well contrasted Panorama, produced by the most delicate and masterly strokes of the pencil. Well may Mr. Ruskin, a fine observer and eloquent describer of various classes of natural appearances, speak of Mr. Wordsworth as the great poetic landscape painter of the age. But Mr. Ruskin has found how seldom the great landscape painters are powerful in expressing human passions and affections on canvass, or even successful in the introduction of human figures into their foregrounds: whereas in the poetic paintings of Mr. Wordsworth the landscape is always subordinate to a higher interest; certainly, in The Waggoner, the little sketch of human nature which occupies, as it were, the front of that encircling back ground, the picture of Benjamin and his temptations, his humble friends and the mute companions of his way, has a character of its own, combining with sportiveness a homely pathos, which must ever be delightful to some of those who are thoroughly conversant with the spirit of Mr. Wordsworth's poetry. It may be compared with the ale-house scene in Tam O'Shanter, parts of Voss's Luise or Ovid's Baucis and Philemon; though it differs from each of them as much as they differ from each other. The Epilogue carries on the feeling of the piece very beautifully. S. C.]

[60 Supplement to the Preface. P. W. III. p. 392.

The next paragraph to this sentence, with a small foot-note, is withdrawn; respecting which see the Introduction. S.C.]

for their fuller sympathy, I dare not flatter myself, that the freedom with which I have declared my opinions concerning both his theory and his defects, most of which are more or less connected with his theory, either as cause or effect, will be satisfactory or pleasing to *all* the poet's admirers and advocates. More indiscriminate than mine their admiration may be: deeper and more sincere it cannot be. But I have advanced no opinion either for praise or censure, other than as texts introductory to the reasons which compel me to form it. Above all, I was fully convinced that such a criticism was not only wanted; but that, if executed with adequate ability, it must conduce, in no mean degree, to Mr. Wordsworth's *reputation*. His *fame* belongs to another age, and can neither be accelerated nor retarded. How small the proportion of the defects are to the beauties, I have repeatedly declared; and that no one of them originates in deficiency of poetic genius. Had they been more and greater, I should still, as a friend to his literary character in the present age, consider an analytic display of them as *pure gain*; if only it removed, as surely to all reflecting minds even the foregoing analysis must have removed, the strange mistake, so slightly grounded yet so widely and industriously propagated, of Mr. Wordsworth's turn for *simplicity!* I am not half as much irritated by hearing his enemies abuse him for vulgarity of style, subject, and conception; as I am disgusted with the gilded side of the same meaning, as displayed by some affected admirers, with whom he is, forsooth, a "sweet, simple poet!" and *so* natural, that little master Charles and his younger sister are *so* charmed with them, that they play at "Goody Blake," or at "Johnny and Betty Foy!"

Were the collection of poems, published with these biographical sketches, important enough, (which I am not vain enough to believe,) to deserve such a distinction; *even as I have done, so would I be done unto.*

For more than eighteen months have the volume of Poems, entitled SIBYLLINE LEAVES, and the present volumes, up to this page, been printed, and ready for publication. But, ere I speak of myself in the tones, which are alone natural to me under the circumstances of late years, I would fain present myself to the Reader as I was in the first dawn of my literary life:

> When Hope grew round me, like the climbing vine,
> And fruits, and foliage, not my own, seem'd mine![61]

For this purpose I have selected from the letters, which I wrote home from Germany, those which appeared likely to be most interesting, and at the same time most pertinent to the title of this work.

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[61] [Coleridge's Poetical Works, I. p. 238. S. C.
*Mixturque novas frondes, et non sua poma.* Georg. II. v. 82. Ed.]

# SATYRANE'S LETTERS.

## LETTER I.

ON Sunday morning, September 16, 1798, the Hamburg packet set sail from Yarmouth: and I, for the first time in my life, beheld my native land retiring from me. At the moment of its disappearance—in all the kirks, churches, chapels, and meeting-houses, in which the greater number, I hope, of my countrymen were at that time assembled, I will dare question whether there was one more ardent prayer offered up to heaven, than that which I then preferred for my country. "Now then," (said I to a gentleman who was standing near me,) "we are out of our country." "Not yet, not yet!" he replied, and pointed to the sea; "This, too, is a Briton's country." This *bon mot* gave a fillip to my spirits, I rose and looked round on my fellow-passengers, who were all on the deck. We were eighteen in number, *videlicet*, five Englishmen, an English lady, a French gentleman and his servant, an Hanoverian and his servant, a Prussian, a Swede, two Danes, and a Mulatto boy, a German tailor and his wife, (the smallest couple I ever beheld,) and a Jew. We were all on the deck; but in a short time I observed marks of dismay. The lady retired to the cabin in some confusion, and many of the faces round me assumed a very doleful and

frog-coloured appearance; and within an hour the number of those on deck was lessened by one half. I was giddy, but not sick, and the giddiness soon went away, but left a feverishness and want of appetite, which I attributed, in great measure, to the *sæva Mephitis* of the bilge-water; and it was certainly not decreased by the exportations from the cabin. However, I was well enough to join the able-bodied passengers, one of whom observed not inaptly, that Momus might have discovered an easier way to see a man's inside, than by placing a window in his breast. He needed only have taken a salt-water trip in a packet-boat.

I am inclined to believe, that a packet is far superiour to a stage-coach, as a means of making men open out to each other. In the latter the uniformity of posture disposes to dozing, and the definitiveness of the period, at which the company will separate, makes each individual think more of those *to* whom he is going, than of those *with* whom he is going. But at sea, more curiosity is excited, if only on this account, that the pleasant or unpleasant qualities of your companions are of greater importance to you, from the uncertainty how long you may be obliged to house with them. Besides, if you are countrymen, that now begins to form a distinction and a bond of brotherhood; and if of different countries, there are new incitements of conversation, more to ask and more to communicate. I found that I had interested the Danes in no common degree. I had crept into the boat on the deck and fallen asleep; but was awakened by one of them, about three o'clock in the afternoon, who told me that they had been seeking me in every hole and corner, and insisted that I should join their party and drink with them. He talked English with such flu-

ency, as left me wholly unable to account for the singular and even ludicrous incorrectness with which he spoke it. I went, and found some excellent wines and a dessert of grapes with a pine-apple. The Danes had christened me Doctor Teology, and dressed as I was all in black, with large shoes and black worsted stockings, I might certainly have passed very well for a Methodist missionary. However I disclaimed my title. What then may you be? A man of fortune? No!—A merchant? No!—A merchant's traveller? No!—A clerk? No!—*Un Philosophe*, perhaps? It was at that time in my life, in which of all possible names and characters I had the greatest disgust to that of "*un Philosophe*." But I was weary of being questioned, and rather than be nothing, or at best only the abstract idea of a man, I submitted by a bow, even to the aspersion implied in the word "*un Philosophe*."—The Dane then informed me, that all in the present party were Philosophers likewise. Certes we were not of the Stoick school. For we drank and talked and sung, till we talked and sung all together; and then we rose and danced on the deck a set of dances, which in *one* sense of the word at least, were very intelligibly and appropriately entitled *reels*. The passengers, who lay in the cabin below in all the agonies of sea-sickness, must have found our bacchanalian merriment

——————————————— a tune
Harsh and of dissonant mood from their complaint.[1]

I thought so at the time; and, (by way, I suppose, of supporting my newly assumed philosophical character,) I thought too, how closely the greater number of our virtues are connected with the fear of death, and

[1] [Milton's Samson Agonistes. I. 661. S. C.]

how little sympathy we bestow on pain, where there is no danger.

The two Danes were brothers. The one was a man with a clear white complexion, white hair, and white eyebrows; looked silly, and nothing that he uttered gave the lie to his looks. The other, whom, by way of eminence I have called *the Dane*, had likewise white hair, but was much shorter than his brother, with slender limbs, and a very thin face slightly pock-fretten. This man convinced me of the justice of an old remark, that many a faithful portrait in our novels and farces has been rashly censured for an outrageous caricature, or perhaps nonentity. I had retired to my station in the boat—he came and seated himself by my side, and appeared not a little tipsy. He commenced the conversation in the most magnific style, and, as a sort of pioneering to his own vanity, he flattered me with *such* grossness! The parasites of the old comedy were modest in the comparison. His language and accentuation were so exceedingly singular, that I determined for once in my life to take notes of a conversation. Here it follows, somewhat abridged, indeed, but in all other respects as accurately as my memory permitted.

THE DANE. Vat imagination! vat language! vat vast science! and vat eyes! vat a milk-vite forehead! O my heafen! vy, you're a Got!

ANSWER. You do me too much honour, Sir.

THE DANE. O me! if you should dink I is flattering you!—No, no, no! I haf ten tousand a year—yes, ten tousand a year—yes, ten tousand pound a year! Vell—and vat is dhat? a mere trifle! I 'ouldn't gif my sincere heart for ten times dhe money. Yes, you're a Got! I a mere man! But, my dear friend! dhink of me, as a man! Is, is—I mean to

ask you now, my dear friend—is I not very eloquent? Is I not speak English very fine?

ANSW. Most admirably! Believe me, Sir! I have seldom heard even a native talk so *fluently*.

THE DANE. (*Squeezing my hand with great vehemence.*) My *dear* friend! vat an affection and fidelity ve have for each odher! But tell me, do tell me,—Is I not, now and den, speak some fault? Is I not in some wrong?

ANSW. Why, Sir! perhaps it might be observed by nice critics in the English language, that you occasionally use the word "Is" instead of "am." In our best companies we generally say *I am*, and not *I is* or *I'se*. Excuse me, Sir! it is a mere trifle.

THE DANE. O!—*is, is, am, am, am*. Yes, yes—I know, I know.

ANSW. *I am, thou art, he is, we are, ye are, they are.*

THE DANE. Yes, yes—I know, I know—*Am, am, am*, is dhe *præsens*, and *is* is dhe *perfectum*—yes, yes—and *are* is dhe *plusquam perfectum*.

ANSW. And *art*, Sir! is———?

THE DANE. My dear friend! it is *dhe plusquam perfectum*, no, no—dhat is a great lie; are is dhe *plusquam perfectum*—and *art* is dhe *plusquam plue-perfectum*—(*then, swinging my hand to and fro, and cocking his little bright hazle eyes at me, that danced with vanity and wine*)—You see, my dear friend! that I too have *some* lehrning.

ANSW. Learning, Sir? Who dares suspect it? Who can listen to you for a minute, who can even look at you, without perceiving the extent of it?

THE DANE. My *dear* friend!—(*then with a would-be humble look, and in a tone of voice as if he was reasoning*) I could not talk so of *præsens* and

*imperfectum*, and *futurum* and *plusquamplue perfectum*, and all dhat, my dear friend! without *some* lehrning?

ANSW. Sir! a man like you cannot talk on any subject without discovering the depth of his information.

THE DANE. Dhe grammatic Greek, my friend; ha! ha! ha! *(laughing, and swinging my hand to and fro—then with a sudden transition to great solemnity)* Now I will tell you, my dear friend! Dhere did happen about me vat de whole historia of Denmark record no instance about nobody else. Dhe bishop did ask me all dhe questions about all dhe religion in dhe Latin grammar.

ANSW. The grammar, Sir? The language, I presume———

THE DANE. *(A little offended.)* Grammar is language, and language is grammar—

ANSW. Ten thousand pardons!

THE DANE. Vell, and I was only fourteen years—

ANSW. Only fourteen years old?

THE DANE. No more. I vas fourteen years old—and he asked me all questions, religion and philosophy, and all in dhe Latin language—and I answered him all every one, my dear friend! all in dhe Latin language.

ANSW. A prodigy! an absolute prodigy!

THE DANE. No, no, no! he was a bishop, a great superintendent.

ANSW. Yes! a bishop.

THE DANE. A bishop—not a mere predicant, not a prediger—

ANSW. My dear Sir! we have misunderstood each other. I said that your answering in Latin at so early an age was a prodigy, that is, a thing that is wonderful; that does not often happen.

THE DANE. Often! Dhere is not von instance recorded in dhe whole historia of Denmark.

ANSW. And since then, Sir——?

THE DANE. I was sent ofer to dhe Vest Indies to our Island, and dhere I had no more to do vid books. No! no! I put my genius anodher way—and I haf made ten tousand pound a year. Is not dhat *ghenius*, my dear friend?—But vat is money?—I dhink dhe poorest man alive my equal. Yes, my dear friend! my little fortune is pleasant to my generous heart, because I can do good—no man with so little a fortune ever did so much generosity—no person,—no man person, no woman person ever denies it. But we are all Got's children.

Here the Hanoverian interrupted him, and the other Dane, the Swede, and the Prussian, joined us, together with a young Englishman who spoke the German fluently, and interpreted to me many of the Prussian's jokes. The Prussian was a travelling merchant, turned of threescore, a hale man, tall, strong, and stout, full of stories, gesticulations, and buffoonery, with the soul as well as the look of a mountebank, who, while he is making you laugh, picks your pocket. Amid all his droll looks and droll gestures, there remained one look untouched by laughter; and that one look was the true face, the others were but its mask. The Hanoverian was a pale, fat, bloated young man, whose father had made a large fortune in London, as an army-contractor. He seemed to emulate the manners of young Englishmen of fortune. He was a good-natured fellow, not without information or literature; but a most egregious coxcomb. He had been in the habit of attending the House of Commons, and had once spoken, as he informed me, with great applause in a debating society. For this he appeared to

have qualified himself with laudable industry: for he was perfect in Walker's Pronouncing Dictionary, and with an accent, which forcibly reminded me of the Scotchman in Roderic Random, who professed to teach the English pronunciation, he was constantly *deferring* to my superiour judgment, whether or no I had pronounced this or that word with propriety, or "the true delicacy." When he spoke, though it were only half a dozen sentences, he always rose; for which I could detect no other motive, than his partiality to that elegant phrase so liberally introduced in the orations of our British legislators, "While I am on my legs." The Swede, whom for reasons that will soon appear, I shall distinguish by the name of Nobility, was a strong-featured, scurvy-faced man, his complexion resembling, in colour, a red hot poker beginning to cool. He appeared miserably dependent on the Dane; but was, however, incomparably the best informed and most rational of the party. Indeed his manners and conversation discovered him to be both a man of the world and a gentleman. The Jew was in the hold: the French gentleman was lying on the deck so ill, that I could observe nothing concerning him, except the affectionate attentions of his servant to him. The poor fellow was very sick himself, and every now and then ran to the side of the vessel, still keeping his eye on his master, but returned in a moment and seated himself again by him, now supporting his head, now wiping his forehead and talking to him all the while in the most soothing tones. There had been a matrimonial squabble of a very ludicrous kind in the cabin, between the little German tailor and his little wife. He had secured two beds, one for himself and one for her. This had struck the little woman as a very cruel action; she insisted upon their having

but one, and assured the mate in the most piteous tones, that she was his lawful wife. The mate and the cabin boy decided in her favour, abused the little man for his want of tenderness with much humour, and hoisted him into the same compartment with his sea-sick wife. This quarrel was interesting to me, as it procured me a bed, which I otherwise should not have had.

In the evening, at seven o'clock, the sea rolled higher, and the Dane, by means of the greater agitation, eliminated enough of what he had been swallowing to make room for a great deal more. His favourite potation was sugar and brandy, *i. e.* a very little warm water with a large quantity of brandy, sugar, and nutmeg. His servant boy, a black-eyed Mulatto, had a good-natured round face, exactly the colour of the skin of the walnut-kernel. The Dane and I were again seated, *tête-à-tête*, in the ship's boat. The conversation, which was now indeed rather an oration than a dialogue, became extravagant beyond all that I ever heard. He told me that he had made a large fortune in the island of Santa Cruz, and was now returning to Denmark to enjoy it. He expatiated on the style in which he meant to live, and the great undertakings which he proposed to himself to commence, till, the brandy aiding his vanity, and his vanity and garrulity aiding the brandy, he talked like a madman —entreated me to accompany him to Denmark— there I should see his influence with the government, and he would introduce me to the king, &c. &c. Thus he went on dreaming aloud, and then passing with a very lyrical transition to the subject of general politics, he declaimed, like a member of the Corresponding Society, *about*, (not concerning,) the Rights of Man, and assured me that, notwithstanding his fortune, he thought the poorest man alive his equal. "All are

equal, my dear friend! all are equal! Ve are all Got's children. The poorest man haf the same rights with me. Jack! Jack! some more sugar and brandy. Dhere is dhat fellow now! He is a Mulatto—but he is my equal.—That's right, Jack! *(taking the sugar and brandy.)* Here you Sir! shake hands with dhis gentleman! Shake hands with me, you dog! Dhere, dhere!—We are all equal my dear friend!——Do I not speak like Socrates, and Plato, and Cato—they were all philosophers, my dear *philosophe!* all very great men!—and so was Homer and Virgil—but they were poets. Yes, yes! I know all about it!—But what can any body say more than this? We are all equal, all Got's children. I haf ten tousand a year, but I am no more dhan de meanest man alive. I haf no pride; and yet, my dear friend! I can say, do! and and it is done. Ha! ha! ha! my dear friend! Now dhere is dhat gentleman (*pointing* to Nobility) he is a Swedish baron—you shall see. Ho! (*calling to the Swede*) get me, will you, a bottle of wine from the cabin. SWEDE.—Here, Jack! go and get your master a bottle of wine from the cabin. *Dane.* No, no, no! do *you* go now—you go yourself—*you* go now! *Swede.* Pah!—*Dane.* Now go! Go, I pray you. *And the Swede went!!*

After this the Dane commenced an harangue on religion, and mistaking me for *un philosophe* in the continental sense of the word, he talked of Deity in a declamatory style, very much resembling the devotional rants of that rude blunderer, Mr. Thomas Paine, in his Age of Reason, and whispered in my ear, what damned *hypocrism* all Jesus Christ's business was. I dare aver, that few men have less reason to charge themselves with indulging in *persiflage* than myself. I should hate it, if it were only that it is a Frenchman's

vice, and feel a pride in avoiding it, because our own language is too honest to have a word to express it by. But in this instance the temptation had been too powerful, and I have placed it on the list of my offences. Pericles answered one of his dearest friends, who had solicited him on a case of life and death, to take an equivocal oath for his preservation: *Debeo amicis opitulari, sed usque ad Deos.*[2] Friendship herself must place her last and boldest step on this side the altar. What Pericles would not do to save a friend's life, you may be assured, I would not hazard merely to mill the chocolate-pot of a drunken fool's vanity till it frothed over. Assuming a serious look, I professed myself a believer, and sunk at once an hundred fathoms in his good graces. He retired to his cabin, and I wrapped myself up in my great coat, and looked at the water. A beautiful white cloud of foam at momently intervals coursed by the side of the vessel with a roar, and little stars of flame danced and sparkled and went out in it: and every now and then light detachments of this white cloud-like foam darted off from the vessel's side, each with its own small constellation, over the sea, and scoured out of sight like a Tartar troop over a wilderness.

It was cold, the cabin was at open war with my olfactories, and I found reason to rejoice in my great coat, a weighty high-caped, respectable rug, the collar of which turned over, and played the part of a night-cap very passably. In looking up at two or three bright stars, which oscillated with the motion of the sails, I fell asleep, but was awakened at one o'clock, Monday morning, by a shower of rain. I found my-

[2] *Translation.* It behoves me to side with my friends, but only as far as the gods.

self compelled to go down into the cabin, where I slept very soundly, and awoke with a very good appetite at breakfast time, my nostrils, the most placable of all the senses, reconciled to, or indeed insensible of the *mephitis*.

Monday, September 17th, I had a long conversation with the Swede, who spoke with the most poignant contempt of the Dane, whom he described as a fool, purse-mad; but he confirmed the boasts of the Dane respecting the largeness of his fortune, which he had acquired in the first instance as an advocate, and afterwards as a planter. From the Dane and from himself I collected that he was indeed a Swedish nobleman, who had squandered a fortune, that was never very large, and had made over his property to the Dane, on whom he was now utterly dependent. He seemed to suffer very little pain from the Dane's insolence. He was in a high degree humane and attentive to the English lady, who suffered most fearfully, and for whom he performed many little offices with a tenderness and delicacy which seemed to prove real goodness of heart. Indeed his general manners and conversation were not only pleasing, but even interesting; and I struggled to believe his insensibility respecting the Dane philosophical fortitude. For though the Dane was now quite sober, his character oozed out of him at every pore. And after dinner, when he was again flushed with wine, every quarter of an hour or perhaps oftener he would shout out to the Swede, "Ho! Nobility, go—do such a thing! Mr. Nobility!—tell the gentlemen such a story, and so forth;" with an insolence which must have excited disgust and detestation, if his vulgar rants on the sacred rights of equality, joined to his wild havock of general grammar no less

than of the English language, had not rendered it so irresistibly laughable.

At four o'clock I observed a wild duck swimming on the waves, a single solitary wild duck. It is not easy to conceive, how interesting a thing it looked in that round objectless desert of waters. I had associated such a feeling of immensity with the ocean, that I felt exceedingly disappointed, when I was out of sight of all land, at the narrowness and *nearness*, as it were, of the circle of the horizon. So little are images capable of satisfying the obscure feelings connected with words. In the evening the sails were lowered, lest we should run foul of the land, which can be seen only at a small distance. And at four o'clock, on Tuesday morning, I was awakened by the cry of "land! land!" It was an ugly island rock at a distance on our left, called Heiligeland, well known to many passengers from Yarmouth to Hamburg, who have been obliged by stormy weather to pass weeks and weeks in weary captivity on it, stripped of all their money by the exorbitant demands of the wretches who inhabit it. So at least the sailors informed me.—About nine o'clock we saw the main land, which seemed scarcely able to hold its head above water, low, flat, and dreary, with light-houses and land-marks which seemed to give a character and language to the dreariness. We entered the mouth of the Elbe, passing Neu-werk; though as yet the right bank only of the river was visible to us. On this I saw a church, and thanked God for my safe voyage, not without affectionate thoughts of those I had left in England. At eleven o'clock on the same morning we arrived at Cuxhaven, the ship dropped anchor, and the boat was hoisted out, to carry the Hanoverian and a few others on shore. The captain

agreed to take us, who remained, to Hamburg for ten guineas, to which the Dane contributed so largely, that the other passengers paid but half a guinea each. Accordingly we hauled anchor, and passed gently up the river. At Cuxhaven both sides of the river may be seen in clear weather; we could now see the right bank only. We passed a multitude of English traders that had been waiting many weeks for a wind. In a short time both banks became visible, both flat and evidencing the labour of human hands by their extreme neatness. On the left bank I saw a church or two in the distance; on the right bank we passed by steeple and windmill and cottage, and windmill and single house, windmill and windmill, and neat single house, and steeple. These were the objects and in the succession. The shores were very green and planted with trees not inelegantly. Thirty-five miles from Cuxhaven the night came on us, and, as the navigation of the Elbe is perilous, we dropped anchor.

Over what place, thought I, does the moon hang to *your* eye, my dearest friend? To me it hung over the left bank of the Elbe. Close above the moon was a huge volume of deep black cloud, while a very thin fillet crossed the middle of the orb, as narrow and thin and black as a ribbon of crape. The long trembling road of moonlight, which lay on the water and reached to the stern of our vessel, glimmered dimly and obscurely. We saw two or three lights from the right bank, probably from bed-rooms. I felt the striking contrast between the silence of this majestic stream, whose banks are populous with men and women and children, and flocks and herds—between the silence by night of this peopled river, and the ceaseless noise, and uproar, and loud agitations of the desolate solitude of the ocean. The passengers below had all retired

to their beds; and I felt the interest of this quiet scene the more deeply from the circumstance of having just quitted them. For the Prussian had during the whole of the evening displayed all his talents to captivate the Dane, who had admitted him into the train of his dependents. The young Englishman continued to interpret the Prussian's jokes to me. They were all without exception profane and abominable, but some sufficiently witty, and a few incidents, which he related in his own person, were valuable as illustrating the manners of the countries in which they had taken place.

Five o'clock on Wednesday morning we hauled the anchor, but were soon obliged to drop it again in consequence of a thick fog, which our captain feared would continue the whole day; but about nine it cleared off, and we sailed slowly along, close by the shore of a very beautiful island, forty miles from Cuxhaven, the wind continuing slack. This holm or island is about a mile and a half in length, wedge-shaped, well wooded, with glades of the liveliest green, and rendered more interesting by the remarkably neat farm-house on it. It seemed made for retirement without solitude—a place that would allure one's friends, while it precluded the impertinent calls of mere visiters. The shores of the Elbe now became more beautiful, with rich meadows and trees running like a low wall along the river's edge; and peering over them, neat houses and, (especially on the right bank,) a profusion of steeple-spires, white, black, or red. An instinctive taste teaches men to build their churches in flat countries with spire-steeples, which, as they cannot be referred to any other object, point, as with silent finger, to the sky and stars, and sometimes, when they reflect the brazen light of a rich

though rainy sun-set, appear like a pyramid of flame burning heavenward. I remember once, and once only, to have seen a spire in a narrow valley of a mountainous country. The effect was not only mean but ludicrous, and reminded me against my will of an *extinguisher;* the close neighbourhood of the high mountain, at the foot of which it stood, had so completely dwarfed it, and deprived it of all connection with the sky or clouds. Forty-six English miles from Cuxhaven, and sixteen from Hamburg, the Danish village Veder ornaments the left bank with its black steeple, and close by it is the wild and pastoral hamlet of Schulau. Hitherto both the right and left bank, green to the very brink, and level with the river, resembled the shores of a park canal. The trees and houses were alike low, sometimes the low trees overtopping the yet lower houses, sometimes the low houses rising above the yet lower trees. But at Schulau the left bank rises at once forty or fifty feet, and stares on the river with its perpendicular *façade* of sand, thinly patched with tufts of green. The Elbe continued to present a more and more lively spectacle from the multitude of fishing boats and the flocks of sea gulls wheeling round them, the clamorous rivals and companions of the fishermen; till we came to Blankaness, a most interesting village scattered amid scattered trees, over three hills in three divisions. Each of the three hills stares upon the river, with faces of bare sand, with which the boats with their bare poles, standing in files along the banks, made a sort of fantastic harmony. Between each *façade* lies a green and woody dell, each deeper than the other. In short it is a large village made up of individual cottages, each cottage in the centre of its own little wood or orchard, and each with its own separate path:

a village with a labyrinth of paths, or rather a *neighbourhood* of houses! It is inhabited by fishermen and boat-makers, the Blankanese boats being in great request through the whole navigation of the Elbe. Here first we saw the spires of Hamburg, and from hence, as far as Altona, the left bank of the Elbe is uncommonly pleasing, considered as the vicinity of an industrious and republican city—in that style of beauty, or rather prettiness, that might tempt the citizen into the country, and yet gratify the taste which he had acquired in the town. Summer-houses and Chinese show-work are everywhere scattered along the high and green banks; the boards of the farm-houses left unplastered and gaily painted with green and yellow; and scarcely a tree not cut into shapes and made to remind the human being of his own power and intelligence instead of the wisdom of nature. Still, however, these are links of connection between town and country, and far better than the affectation of tastes and enjoyments for which mens' habits have disqualified them. Pass them by on Saturdays and Sundays with the burghers of Hamburg smoking their pipes, the women and children feasting in the alcoves of box and yew, and it becomes a nature of its own. On Wednesday, four o'clock, we left the vessel, and passing with trouble through the huge masses of shipping that seemed to choke the wide Elbe from Altona upward, we were at length landed at the Boom House, Hamburg.

## LETTER II. To a Lady.

Ratzeburg.

*Meine liebe Freundinn,*

*SEE how natural the German comes from me,* though I have not yet been six weeks in the country!—almost as fluently as English from my neighbour the *Amtsschreiber*, (or public secretary,) who as often as we meet, though it should be half a dozen times in the same day, never fails to greet me with—"* * * *ddam your ploot unt eyes, my dearest Englander! vhee goes it!*"—which is certainly a proof of great generosity on his part, these words being his whole stock of English. I had, however, a better reason than the desire of displaying my proficiency: for I wished to put you in good humour with a language, from the acquirement of which I have promised myself much edification and the means too of communicating a new pleasure to you and your sister, during our winter readings. And how can I do this better than by pointing out its gallant attention to the ladies? Our English affix, *ess*, is, I believe, confined either to words derived from the Latin, as *actress*, *directress*, &c. or from the French, as *mistress*, *duchess*, and the like. But the German, *inn*, enables us to designate the sex in every possible relation of life. Thus the Amtmann's lady is the *Frau Amtmanninn*—the secretary's wife, (by the bye the handsomest woman I have yet seen in Germany,) is *die allerliebste Frau Amtsschreiberinn*—the colonel's lady, *die Frau Obristinn* or *Colonellinn*—and even the parson's wife,

*die Frau Pastorinn.* But I am especially pleased with their *Freundinn*, which, unlike the *amica* of the Romans, is seldom used but in its best and purest sense. Now, I know it will be said, that a friend is already something more than a friend, when a man feels an anxiety to express to himself that this friend is a female; but this I deny—in that sense at least in which the objection will be made. I would hazard the impeachment of heresy, rather than abandon my belief that there is a sex in our souls as well as in their perishable garments; and he who does not feel it, never truly loved a sister—nay, is not capable even of loving a wife as she deserves to be loved, if she indeed be worthy of that holy name.

Now I know, my gentle friend, what you are murmuring to yourself—"This is so like him! running away after the first bubble, that chance has blown off from the surface of his fancy; when one is anxious to learn where he is and what he has seen." Well then! that I am settled at Ratzeburg, with my motives and the particulars of my journey hither,———— will inform you. My first letter to him, with which doubtless he has edified your whole fireside, left me safely landed at Hamburg on the Elbe Stairs, at the Boom House. While standing on the stairs, I was amused by the contents of the passage-boat which crosses the river once or twice a day from Hamburg to Haarburg. It was stowed close with all people of all nations, in all sorts of dresses; the men all with pipes in their mouths, and these pipes of all shapes and fancies—straight and wreathed, simple and complex, long and short, cane, clay, porcelain, wood, tin, silver, and ivory; most of them with silver chains and silver bole-covers. Pipes and boots are the first universal characteristic of the male Hamburgers that would strike the eye of

a raw traveller. But I forget my promise of journalizing as much as possible.—Therefore, *Septr. 19th Afternoon.* My companion who, you recollect, speaks the French language with unusual propriety, had formed a kind of confidential acquaintance with the emigrant, who appeared to be a man of sense, and whose manners were those of a perfect gentleman. He seemed about fifty or rather more. Whatever is unpleasant in French manners from excess in the *degree*, had been softened down by age or affliction; and all that is delightful in the *kind*, alacrity and delicacy in little attentions, &c. remained, and without bustle, gesticulation, or disproportionate eagerness. His demeanour exhibited the minute philanthrophy of a polished Frenchman, tempered by the sobriety of the English character disunited from its reserve. There is something strangely attractive in the character of a *gentleman* when you apply the word emphatically, and yet in that sense of the term which it is more easy to *feel* than to define. It neither includes the possession of high moral excellence, nor of necessity even the ornamental graces of manner. I have now in my mind's eye a person whose life would scarcely stand scrutiny even in the court of honour, much less in that of conscience; and his manners, if nicely observed, would of the two excite an idea of awkwardness rather than of elegance: and yet every one who conversed with him felt and acknowledged *the gentleman*. The secret of the matter, I believe to be this—we feel the gentlemanly character present to us, whenever, under all the circumstances of social intercourse, the trivial not less than the important, through the whole *detail* of his manners and deportment, and with the ease of a habit, a person shews respect to others in *such a way*, as at the same time implies in his own feelings an

habitual and assured anticipation of reciprocal respect from them to himself. In short, the *gentlemanly* character arises out of the feeling of Equality acting, as a Habit, yet flexible to the varieties of Rank, and modified without being disturbed or superseded by them. This description will perhaps explain to you the ground of one of your own remarks, as I was englishing to you the interesting dialogue concerning the causes of the corruption of eloquence. "What perfect gentlemen these old Romans must have been! I was impressed, I remember, with the same feeling at the time I was reading a translation of Cicero's philosophical dialogues and of his epistolary correspondence: while in Pliny's Letters I seemed to have a different feeling —he gave me the notion of a very *fine* gentleman." You uttered the words as if you had felt that the adjunct had injured the substance and the increased degree altered the kind. Pliny was the courtier of an absolute monarch—Cicero an aristocratic republican. For this reason the character of gentleman, in the sense to which I have confined it, is frequent in England, rare in France, and found, where it is found, in age or the latest period of manhood; while in Germany the character is almost unknown. But the proper *antipode* of a gentleman is to be sought for among the Anglo-American democrats.

I owe this digression, as an act of justice to this amiable Frenchman, and of humiliation for myself. For in a little controversy between us on the subject of French poetry, he made me feel my own ill behaviour by the silent reproof of contrast, and when I afterwards apologized to him for the warmth of my language, he answered me with a cheerful expression of surprise, and an immediate compliment, which a gentleman might both make with dignity and receive

with pleasure. I was pleased, therefore, to find it agreed on, that we should, if possible, take up our quarters in the same house. My friend went with him in search of an *hotel*, and I to deliver my letters of recommendation.

I walked onward at a brisk pace, enlivened not so much by any thing I actually saw, as by the confused sense that I was for the first time in my life on the *continent* of our planet. I seemed to myself like a liberated bird that had been hatched in an aviary, who now, after his first soar of freedom, poises himself in the upper air. Very naturally I began to wonder at *all* things, some for being so like and some for being so unlike the things in England—Dutch women with large umbrella hats shooting out half a yard before them, with a prodigal plumpness of petticoat behind—the women of Hamburg with caps plaited on the caul with silver, or gold, or both, bordered round with stiffened lace, which *stood out* before their eyes, but not lower, so that the eyes sparkled through it—the Hanoverian women with the fore part of the head bare, then a stiff lace standing up like a wall perpendicular on the cap, and the cap behind *tailed* with an enormous quantity of ribbon which lies or tosses on the back:

> "Their visnomies seem'd like a goodly banner
> Spread in defiance of all enemies."

——The ladies all in English dresses, all *rouged*, and all with bad teeth: which you notice instantly from their contrast to the almost *animal, too* glossy mother-of-pearl whiteness and the regularity of the teeth of the laughing, loud-talking country-women and servant-girls, who, with their clean white stockings and with slippers without heel quarters, tripped along the

dirty streets, as if they were secured by a charm from the dirt: with a lightness too, which surprised me, who had always considered it as one of the annoyances of sleeping *in an Inn*, that I had to clatter up stairs in a pair of them. The streets narrow; to my English nose sufficiently offensive, and explaining at first sight the universal use of boots; without any appropriate path for the foot-passengers; the gable ends of the houses all towards the street, some in the ordinary triangular form and *entire* as the botanists say; but the greater number notched and scolloped with more than Chinese grotesqueness. Above all, I was struck with the profusion of windows, so large and so many, that the houses look all glass. Mr. Pitt's window tax, with its pretty little *additionals* sprouting out from it like young toadlets on the back of a Surinam toad, would certainly improve the appearance of the Hamburg houses, which have a slight summer look, not *in keeping* with their size, incongruous with the climate, and precluding that feeling of retirement and self-content, which one wishes to associate with a house in a noisy city. But a conflagration would, I fear, be the previous requisite to the production of any architectural beauty in Hamburg: for verily it is a filthy town. I moved on and crossed a multitude of ugly bridges, with huge black deformities of water wheels close by them. The water intersects the city every where, and would have furnished to the genius of Italy the capabilities of all that is most beautiful and magnificent in architecture. It might have been the rival of Venice, and it is huddle and ugliness, stench and stagnation. The *Jungfer Stieg*, (that is, Young Ladies' Walk), to which my letters directed me, made an exception. It was a walk or *promenade* planted with treble rows of elm trees, which, being

yearly pruned and cropped, remain slim and dwarf-like. This walk occupies one side of a square piece of water, with many swans on it perfectly tame, and, moving among the swans, shewy pleasure-boats with ladies in them, rowed by their husbands or lovers.***

*(Some paragraphs have been here omitted.)*

*****thus embarrassed by sad and solemn politeness still more than by broken English, it sounded like the voice of an old friend when I heard the emigrant's servant inquiring after me. He had come for the purpose of guiding me to our *hotel*. Through streets and streets I pressed on as happy as a child, and, I doubt not, with a childish expression of wonderment in my busy eyes, amused by the wicker waggons with movable benches across them, one behind the other, (these were the hackney coaches;) amused by the sign-boards of the shops, on which all the articles sold within are painted, and that too very exactly, though in a grotesque confusion, (a useful substitute for language in this great mart of nations;) amused with the incessant tinkling of the shop and house door bells, the bell hanging over each door and struck with a small iron rod at every entrance and exit;—and finally, amused by looking in at the windows, as I passed along; the ladies and gentlemen drinking coffee or playing cards, and the gentlemen all smoking. I wished myself a painter, that I might have sent you a sketch of one of the card parties. The long pipe of one gentleman rested on the table, its bole half a yard from his mouth, fuming like a censer by the fish-pool—the other gentleman, who was dealing the cards, and of course had both hands employed, held his pipe in his teeth, which hanging down between his knees, smoked beside his ancles. Hogarth himself never drew a more ludicrous distortion both

of attitude and physiognomy, than this effort occasioned: nor was there wanting beside it one of those beautiful female faces which the same Hogarth, in whom the satirist never extinguished that love of beauty which belonged to him as a poet, so often and so gladly introduces, as the central figure, in a crowd of humorous deformities, which figure, (such is the power of true genius!) neither acts, nor is *meant* to act as a contrast; but diffuses through all, and over each of the group, a spirit of reconciliation and human kindness; and, even when the attention is no longer consciously directed to the cause of this feeling, still blends its tenderness with our laughter: and thus prevents the instructive merriment at the whims of nature or the foibles or humours of our fellowmen from degenerating into the heart-poison of contempt or hatred.

Our *hotel* DIE WILDE MAN, (the sign of which was no bad likeness of the landlord, who had ingrafted on a very grim face a restless grin, that was at every man's service, and which indeed, like an actor rehearsing to himself, he kept playing in *expectation* of an occasion for it)—neither our *hotel*, I say, nor its landlord were of the genteelest class. But it has one great advantage for a stranger, by being in the market place, and the next neighbour of the huge church of St. Nicholas: a church with shops and houses built up against it, out of which *wens* and *warts* its high massy steeple rises, *necklaced* near the top with a round of large gilt balls. A better pole-star could scarcely be desired. Long shall I retain the impression made on my mind by the awful echo, so loud and long and tremulous, of the deep-toned clock within this church, which awoke me at two in the morning from a distressful dream, occasioned, I believe, by the feather

bed, which is used here instead of bed-clothes. I will rather carry my blanket about with me like a wild Indian, than submit to this abominable custom. Our emigrant acquaintance was, we found, an intimate friend of the celebrated Abbé de Lisle: and from the large fortune which he possessed under the monarchy, had rescued sufficient not only for independence, but for respectability. He had offended some of his fellow-emigrants in London, whom he had obliged with considerable sums, by a refusal to make further advances, and in consequence of their intrigues had received an order to quit the kingdom. I thought it one proof of his innocence, that he attached no blame either to the alien act, or to the minister who had exerted it against him; and a still greater, that he spoke of London with rapture, and of his favourite niece, who had married and settled in England, with all the fervour and all the pride of a fond parent. A man sent by force out of a country, obliged to sell out of the stocks at a great loss, and exiled from those pleasures and that style of society which habit had rendered essential to his happiness, whose predominant feelings were yet all of a private nature, resentment for friendship outraged, and anguish for domestic affections interrupted —such a man, I think, I could dare warrant guiltless of *espionnage* in any service, most of all in that of the present French Directory. He spoke with ecstasy of Paris under the Monarchy: and yet the particular facts, which made up his description, left as deep a conviction on my mind, of French worthlessness, as his own tale had done of emigrant ingratitude. Since my arrival in Germany, I have not met a single person, even among those who abhor the Revolution, that spoke with favour, or even charity, of the French emigrants. Though the belief of their influence in

the organization of this disastrous war, (from the horrours of which, North Germany deems itself only reprieved, not secured,) may have some share in the general aversion with which they are regarded: yet I am deeply persuaded that the far greater part is owing to their own profligacy, to their treachery and hard-heartedness to each other, and the domestic misery or corrupt principles which so many of them have carried into the families of their protectors. My heart dilated with honest pride, as I recalled to mind the stern yet amiable characters of the English patriots, who sought refuge on the Continent at the Restoration! O let not our civil war under the first Charles be paralleled with the French revolution! In the former, the chalice overflowed from excess of principle; in the latter, from the fermentation of the dregs! The former, was a civil war between the virtues and virtuous prejudices of the two parties; the latter, between the vices. The Venetian glass of the French monarchy shivered and flew asunder with the working of a double poison.

*Sept.* 20th. I was introduced to Mr. Klopstock, the brother of the poet, who again introduced me to professor Ebeling, an intelligent and lively man, though deaf: so deaf, indeed, that it was a painful effort to talk with him, as we were obliged to drop all our pearls into a huge ear-trumpet. From this courteous and kind-hearted man of letters, (I hope, the German *literati* in general may resemble this first specimen,) I heard a tolerable Italian pun, and an interesting anecdote. When Buonaparte was in Italy, having been irritated by some instance of perfidy, he said in a loud and vehement tone, in a public company—"'tis a true proverb, *gli Italiani tutti ladroni*"—(that is, *the Italians all plunderers.*) A

lady had the courage to reply, "*Non tutti; ma* BUONA PARTE," (*not all, but a good part,* or *Buonaparte.*) This, I confess, sounded to *my* ears, as one of the many good things that *might have been* said. The anecdote is more valuable; for it instances the ways and means of French insinuation. Hoche had received much information concerning the face of the country from a map of unusual fulness and accuracy, the maker of which, he heard, resided at Düsseldorf. At the storming of Düsseldorf by the French army, Hoche previously ordered, that the house and property of this man should be preserved, and intrusted the performance of the order to an officer on whose troop he could rely. Finding afterwards, that the man had escaped before the storming commenced, Hoche exclaimed, "HE had no reason to flee! It is *for* such men, not *against* them, that the French nation makes war, and consents to shed the blood of its children." You remember Milton's sonnet—

> "The great Emathian conqueror bid spare
> The house of Pindarus when temple and tower
> Went to the ground"——————[4]

Now though the Düsseldorf map-maker may stand in the same relation to the Theban bard, as the snail, that marks its path by lines of film on the wall it creeps over, to the eagle that soars sunward and beats the tempest with its wings; it does not therefore follow, that the Jacobin of France may not be as valiant a general and as good a politician, as the madman of Macedon.

From Professor Ebeling's Mr. Klopstock accompanied my friend and me to his own house, where I

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[4] [Sonnet viii. "*Captain, or Colonel, or Knight in arms.*"]

saw a fine bust of his brother. There was a solemn and heavy greatness in his countenance, which corresponded to my preconceptions of his style and genius.—I saw there, likewise, a very fine portrait of Lessing, whose works are at present the chief object of my admiration. His eyes were uncommonly like mine, if anything, rather larger and more prominent. But the lower part of his face and his nose—O what an exquisite expression of elegance and sensibility!—There appeared no depth, weight, or comprehensiveness in the forehead.—The whole face seemed to say, that Lessing was a man of quick and voluptuous feelings; of an active but light fancy; acute; yet acute not in the observation of actual life, but in the arrangements and management of the ideal world, that is, in taste, and in metaphysics. I assure you, that I wrote these very words in my memorandum-book with the portrait before my eyes, and when I knew nothing of Lessing but his name, and that he was a German writer of eminence.

We consumed two hours and more over a bad dinner, at the *table d'hôte*. "*Patience at a German ordinary, smiling at time.*" The Germans are the worst cooks in Europe. There is placed for every two persons a bottle of common wine—Rhenish and Claret alternately; but in the houses of the opulent, during the many and long intervals of the dinner, the servants hand round glasses of richer wines. At the Lord of Culpin's they came in this order. Burgundy — Madeira — Port — Frontiniac — Pacchiaretti — Old Hock — Mountain — Champagne — Hock again — Bishop, and lastly, Punch. A tolerable *quantum*, methinks! The last dish at the ordinary, viz. slices of roast pork, (for all the larger dishes are brought in, cut up, and first handed round and then set on the

table,) with stewed prunes and other sweet fruits, and this followed by cheese and butter, with plates of apples, reminded me of Shakespeare,[5] and Shakespeare put it in my head to go to the French comedy.

Bless me! why it is worse than our modern English plays! The first act informed me, that a court martial is to be held on a Count Vatron, who had drawn his sword on the Colonel, his brother-in-law. The officers plead in his behalf—in vain! His wife, the Colonel's sister, pleads with most tempestuous agonies —in vain! She falls into hysterics and faints away, to the dropping of the inner curtain! In the second act sentence of death is passed on the Count—his wife, as frantic and hysterical as before: more so (good industrious creature!) she could not be. The third and last act, the wife still frantic, very frantic indeed!—the soldiers just about to fire, the handerchief actually dropped; when reprieve! reprieve! is heard from behind the scenes: and in comes Prince Somebody, pardons the Count, and the wife is still frantic, only with joy; that was all!

O dear lady! this is one of the cases, in which laughter is followed by melancholy: for such is the *kind* of drama, which is now substituted every where for Shakespeare and Racine. You well know, that I offer violence to my own feelings in joining these names. But however meanly I may think of the

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[5] "*Slender.* I bruised my shin with playing with sword and dagger for a dish of stewed prunes, and by my troth I cannot abide the smell of hot meat since."—So again, *Evans.* "I will make an end of my dinner: there's pippins and cheese to come." [Merry Wives of Windsor. Act i. Sc. 1. and Sc. 3. S. C.]

French serious drama, even in its most perfect specimens; and with whatever right I may complain of its perpetual falsification of the language, and of the connections and transitions of thought, which Nature has appropriated to states of passion; still, however, the French tragedies are consistent works of art, and the offspring of great intellectual power. Preserving a fitness in the parts, and a harmony in the whole, they form a nature of their own, though a false nature. Still they excite the minds of the spectators to active thought, to a striving after ideal excellence. The soul is not stupified into mere sensations by a worthless sympathy with our own ordinary sufferings, or an empty curiosity for the surprising, undignified by the language or the situations which awe and delight the imagination. What, (I would ask of the crowd, that press forward to the pantomimic tragedies and weeping comedies of Kotzebue and his imitators[6]), what are you seeking? Is it comedy? But in the comedy of Shakespeare and Molière the more accurate my knowledge, and the more profoundly I think, the greater is the satisfaction that mingles with my laughter. For though the qualities which these writers pourtray are ludicrous indeed, either from the kind or the excess, and exquisitely ludicrous, yet are they the natural growth of the human mind and such as, with more or less change in the drapery, I can apply to my own heart, or at least to whole classes of my fellow-creatures. How often are not the moralist and the metaphysician obliged for the happiest illustrations of general truths and the subordinate laws of human thought and action to quotations, not only from the tragic characters, but equally from the Jaques,

[6] [See note at the end of this letter.]

Falstaff, and even from the fools and clowns of Shakespeare, or from the Miser, Hypochondriast, and Hypocrite, of Molière! Say not, that I am recommending abstractions: for these class-characteristics, which constitute the instructiveness of a character, are so modified and particularized in each person of the Shakesperian Drama, that life itself does not excite more distinctly that sense of individuality which belongs to real existence. Paradoxical as it may sound, one of the essential properties of geometry is not less essential to dramatic excellence, and, (if I may mention his name without pedantry to a lady,) Aristotle has accordingly required of the poet an involution of the universal in the individual. The chief differences are, that in geometry it is the universal truth itself, which is uppermost in the consciousness, in poetry the individual form in which the truth is clothed. With the ancients, and not less with the elder dramatists of England and France, both comedy and tragedy were considered as kinds of poetry. They neither sought in comedy to make us laugh merely, much less to make us laugh by wry faces, accidents of jargon, slang phrases for the day, or the clothing of common-place morals in metaphors drawn from the shops or mechanic occupations of their characters; nor did they condescend in tragedy to wheedle away the applause of the spectators, by representing before them fac-similes of their own mean selves in all their existing meanness, or to work on their sluggish sympathies by a pathos not a whit more respectable than the maudlin tears of drunkenness. Their tragic scenes were meant to affect us indeed, but within the bounds of pleasure, and in union with the activity both of our understanding and imagination. They wished to transport the mind to a sense of its possible greatness, and to im-

plant the germs of that greatness during the temporary oblivion of the worthless "thing, we are" and of the peculiar state, in which each man *happens* to be; suspending our individual recollections and lulling them to sleep amid the music of nobler thoughts.

*Hold!*—(methinks I hear the spokesman of the crowd reply, and we will listen to him. I am the plaintiff, and he the defendant.)

DEFENDANT. Hold! are not our modern sentimental plays filled with the best Christian morality?

PLAINTIFF. Yes! just as much of it, and just that part of it, which you can exercise without a single Christian virtue—without a single sacrifice that is really painful to you!—just as much as *flatters* you, sends you away pleased with your own hearts, and quite reconciled to your vices, which can never be thought very ill of, when they keep such good company, and walk hand in hand with so much compassion and generosity; adulation so loathsome, that you would spit in the man's face who dared offer it to you in a private company, unless you interpreted it as insulting irony, you appropriate with infinite satisfaction, when you share the garbage with the whole stye, and gobble it out of a common trough. No Cæsar must pace your boards—no Antony, no royal Dane, no Orestes, no Andromache!—

D. No: or as few of them as possible. What has a plain citizen of London, or Hamburg, to do with your kings and queens, and your old school-boy Pagan heroes? Besides, every body knows the *stories;* and what curiosity can we feel———

P. What, Sir, not for the *manner?*—not for the delightful language of the poet?—not for the situations, the action and reaction of the passions?

D. You are hasty, Sir! the only curiosity, we

feel, is in the story: and how can we be anxious concerning the end of a play, or be surprised by it, when we know how it will turn out?

P. Your pardon, for having interrupted you! we now understand each other. You seek then, in a tragedy, which wise men of old held for the highest effort of human genius, the same gratification, as that you receive from a new novel, the last German romance, and other dainties of the day, which *can* be enjoyed but once. If you carry these feelings to the sister art of Painting, Michael Angelo's Sixtine Chapel, and the Scripture Gallery of Raphael can expect no favour from you. *You know all about them beforehand;* and are, doubtless, more familiar with the subjects of those paintings, than with the tragic tales of the historic or heroic ages. There is a consistency, therefore, in your preference of contemporary writers: for the great men of former times, those at least who were deemed great by our ancestors, sought so little to gratify *this* kind of curiosity, that they seemed to have regarded the *story* in a not much higher light, than the painter regards his canvass: as that *on*, not *by*, which they were to display their appropriate excellence. No work, resembling a tale or romance, can well shew less variety of invention in the incidents, or less anxiety in weaving them together, than the DON QUIXOTE of Cervantes. Its admirers feel the disposition to go back and re-peruse some preceding chapter, at least ten times for once that they find any eagerness to hurry forwards: or open the book on those parts which they best recollect, even as we visit those friends oftenest whom we love most, and with whose characters and actions we are the most intimately acquainted. In the divine Ariosto, (as his

countrymen call this, their darling poet,) I question whether there be a single *tale* of his own invention, or the elements of which, were not familiar to the readers of "old romance." I will pass by the ancient Greeks, who thought it even necessary to the fable of a tragedy, that its substance should be previously known. That there had been at least fifty tragedies with the same title, would be one of the motives which determined Sophocles and Euripides, in the choice of Electra, as a subject. But Milton—

D. Aye Milton, indeed!—but do not Dr. Johnson and other great men tell us, that nobody now reads Milton but as a task?

P. So much the worse for them, of whom this can be truly said! But why then do you pretend to admire Shakespeare? The greater part, if not all, of *his* dramas were, as far as the names and the main incidents are concerned, already stock plays. All the *stories*, at least, on which they are built, pre-existed in the chronicles, ballads, or translations of contemporary or preceding English writers. Why, I repeat, do you pretend to admire Shakespeare? Is it, perhaps, that you only *pretend* to admire him? However, as once for all, you have dismissed the well-known events and personages of history, or the epic muse, what have you taken in their stead? Whom has *your* tragic muse armed with her bowl and dagger? the sentimental muse I should have said, whom you have seated in the throne of tragedy? What heroes has *she* reared on her buskins?

D. O! our good friends and next-door neighbours —honest tradesmen, valiant tars, high-spirited half-pay officers, philanthropic Jews, virtuous courtezans, tender-hearted braziers, and sentimental rat-catchers!

—(a little bluff or so, but all our very generous, tender-hearted characters *are* a little rude or misanthropic, and all our misanthropes very tender-hearted.)

P. But I pray you, friend, in what actions great or interesting, can such men be engaged?

D. They give away a great deal of money; find rich dowries for young men and maidens who have all other good qualities; they brow-beat lords, baronets, and justices of the peace, (for they are as bold as Hector!)—they rescue stage coaches at the instant they are falling down precipices; carry away infants in the sight of opposing armies; and some of our performers act a muscular able-bodied man to such perfection, that our dramatic poets, who always have the actors in their eye, seldom fail to make their favourite male character as strong as Samson. And then they take such prodigious leaps!! And what is *done* on the stage is more striking even than what is acted. I once remember such a deafening explosion, that I could not hear a word of the play for half an act after it: and a little real gunpowder being set fire to at the same time, and smelt by all the spectators, the naturalness of the scene was quite astonishing!

P. But how can you connect with such men and such actions that dependence of thousands on the fate of one, which gives so lofty an interest to the personages of Shakespeare, and the Greek Tragedians? How can you connect with them that sublimest of all feelings, the power of destiny and the controlling might of heaven, which seems to elevate the characters which sink beneath its irresistible blow?

D. O mere fancies! We seek and find on the present stage our own wants and passions, our own vexations, losses, and embarrassments.

P. It is your own poor pettifogging nature then,

which you desire to have represented before you?—not human nature in its height and vigour? But surely you might find the former with all its joys and sorrows, more conveniently in your own houses and parishes.

D. True! but here comes a difference. Fortune is blind, but the poet has his eyes open, and is besides as complaisant as fortune is capricious. He makes every thing turn out exactly as we would wish it. He gratifies us by representing those as hateful or contemptible whom we hate and wish to despise.

P. (*aside.*) That is, he gratifies your envy by libelling your superiours.

D. He makes all those precise moralists, who affect to be better than their neighbours, turn out at last abject hypocrites, traitors, and hard-hearted villains; and your men of spirit, who take their girl and their glass with equal freedom, prove the true men of honour, and, (that no part of the audience may remain unsatisfied,) reform in the last scene, and leave no doubt on the minds of the ladies, that they will make most faithful and excellent husbands: though it does seem a pity, that they should be obliged to get rid of qualities which had made them so interesting! Besides, the poor become rich all at once; and in the final matrimonial choice the opulent and high-born themselves are made to confess, that VIRTUE IS THE ONLY TRUE NOBILITY, AND THAT A LOVELY WOMAN IS A DOWRY OF HERSELF!!

P. Excellent! But you have forgotten those brilliant flashes of loyalty, those patriotic praises of the King and Old England, which, especially if conveyed in a metaphor from the ship or the shop, so often solicit and so unfailingly receive the public plaudit! I give your prudence credit for the omission. For the

whole system of your drama is a moral and intellectual *Jacobinism* of the most dangerous kind, and those common-place rants of loyalty are no better than hypocrisy in your playwrights, and your own sympathy, with them a gross self-delusion. For the whole secret of dramatic popularity consists with you in the confusion and subversion of the natural order of things, their causes and their effects; in the excitement of surprise, by representing the qualities of liberality, refined feeling, and a nice sense of honour, (those things rather which pass among you for such), in persons and in classes of life where experience teaches us least to expect them; and in rewarding with all the sympathies, that are the dues of virtue, those criminals whom law, reason, and religion have excommunicated from our esteem!

And now—good night! Truly! I might have written this last sheet without having gone to Germany; but I fancied myself talking to you by your own fireside, and can you think it a small pleasure to me to forget now and then, that I am *not* there? Besides, you and my other good friends have made up your minds to me as I am, and from whatever place I write you will expect that part of my "Travels" will consist of the excursions in my own mind.

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*"Kotzebue and his imitators." Note.*

Kotzebue was born May 3rd 1761, at Weimar, assassinated at Manheim, as being a "foe to freedom and too great friend to Russia," his adopted country, March 11th, 1819. His father, a counsellor of legation, died early, and left him to the sole care of the young widow his mother, whose mind seems to have moulded his so far as early influences could mould it.

"According to my judgment," says Mr. Taylor in his Survey of German Poetry, "Kotzebue is the greatest dramatic genius that Europe has evolved since Shakespeare. In the hundred-

fold variety of his effusions are comprehended plays of every form: farces,—melodramas,—mixt or sentimental dramas, *Misanthropy and Repentance* (known on our stage as *The Stranger*), *The Natural Son*, &c.—household tragedies,—classical tragedies—and especially that vaster and more difficult form of art, which may best be denominated the gothic tragedy, of which Shakespeare's *Macbeth* and Schiller's *Wilhelm Tell*," (Macbeth and—*Wilhelm Tell!*) "are perhaps the noblest specimens, but of which Kotzebue has added a full score to the dramatic repertory of Europe: *Virgin of the Sun, Spaniards in Peru, Count of Burgundy, Gustavus Vasa*," &c. &c.

Mr. Carlyle thinks that this playwright has added nothing to the dramatic *repertory* of Europe. "Kotzebue," says he, in his animated Review of the Survey,—"Kotzebue, whom all nations and kindreds and tongues and peoples, his own people the foremost, after playing with him for some foolish hour, have swept out of doors as a lifeless bundle of dyed rags, is here scientifically examined, measured, pulse-felt, and pronounced to be living and a divinity." "Such is the table," says he, after giving a sarcastic sketch of one of his plays, "which Mr. Taylor has spread for pilgrims in the Prose Wilderness of Life: thus does he sit like a kind host ready to carve; and though the viands and beverage are but, as it were, stewed garlic, Yarmouth herrings, and *blue ruin*, praises them as 'stimulant,' and courteously presses the universe to fall to."

This is substantially the same doctrine as that of my Father's first Letter from Germany, which I believe to be unexceptionable, though I doubt whether the application of it to Kotzebue has not been a *little* too sweeping. I stick to the principle of giving Old Nick his due and *à fortiori* all whom the world associates with him. The genius of Kotzebue was a *theatrical* rather than a dramatic genius, and hence its products were in their nature transitory, though I cannot agree with Mr. Taylor that "*all* comedies are local and transient." The Present lends her *most* powerful aid to those who rely upon her aid alone, and pay no homage to the Permanent. I should think that Kotzebue was as great a master of stage effect, as Whitfield of effect in the pulpit, and was as warm an enthusiast in his lower vocation as the field preacher in his loftier one: it may be seen from his auto-biography, of which Mr. Taylor gives an interesting abridgment, how from his earliest years a passion for *the representable* was nourished in him rather than a love of

literature; how he came to be a great scene-painter and adapted his pictures to pit and boxes rather than to mankind. In this line he was first-rate, and filled a broad space; perhaps the species of art displayed in it rather deserves to be called of slight worth than worthless, or altogether a vain and spurious thing.

Of course I speak thus of these stage-pieces only so far as they were innocent. Mr. Taylor thinks that their morality has been too seriously condemned; that on one point only they were reprehensible, and "trod upon the brink of moral licentiousness." "But on the higher virtues," says he, "their author every where bestows a dignified approbation"—"he has painted more disinterestedly virtuous characters, who, under adversity, persecution, and misrepresentation, remain content with the consciousness of duty performed, and find, in a triumphal self-complacence, an antidote to injustice, and a consolation in death, than any other dramatist ancient or modern." The plays of Kotzebue with all the stimulants they held in solution, are now evaporated, but their character and the acceptance they found belong to the history of the past and are worth recording. To judge from Mr. Taylor's specimens and *analyses* I should say that there was in them an alloy, but that they were by no means wholly immoral, or to be compared for vileness and corruptive tendencies with a class of productions which have obtained a great deal of favour in France and, occasionally some passing favour even amongst ourselves—that *most* despicable class, in which base desires, morbid feelings, and distempered thoughts form the very staple of the piece: in which there is not one breath of air that has blown in the face of heaven. Kotzebue's flashy dramas exhibit a genuine admiration of what is noble and virtuous, while they openly protect certain kinds of vice; it seems as if in them a mistaken philosophy were encroaching on the ground of morals, while in those worse productions corrupt moral feeling is brought face to face with a cold correct morality, and the glow of unworthy passion, sedulously revealed in all its workings and with all that excites it, is met not quenched by cool breezes of respect, on the author's part, for the sternest and purest virtue. Mr. Taylor describes the marvellous combinations and moral prodigies which Kotzebue resorted to in his demand for the impressive, and condemns them; but thinks the liveliness of his dialogue, and its "boldness of appeal to the fairest sentiments and dearest feelings of our nature," deserv-

in of commendation. He has stated fairly enough in what the merits of Kotzebue consisted, only he made the small mistake of comparing them with those of Shakespeare; and he certainly injured the cause of the stage-hero by bringing forward dialogues from his defunct spectacle-pieces for readers to peruse in the cool of their closets. They were never meant for *that*; it was as though we should transport a clever scene-painting into a picture-gallery, or spell out at home a popular preacher's manuscript sermon. He should have confined himself to celebrating the *life*, movement, and stirring adventure of these dramas, which, by a small hyperbole, he might have compared to the pictures of Rubens;—their "facility, fertility, mutability"—"as of English weather;"—their costume, "full of discrimination and pictorial effect;"—the scope they gave for the exhibition of brilliant spectacle, (especially in *The Virgin of the Sun*,) and for the display of an actor's noble figure, as in Rolla;—above all the skill with which they made advantage of the passions and excitements of the day—conducting into their own circle the electric fluid of emotion, which had been generated elsewhere:—whence, in part, they gained their "sudden power" over the feelings, compared by the author of the Survey to "magic metamorphosis."

Mr. Carlyle says of Mr. Taylor's parallel between Schiller, Goethe and Kotzebue, in his "smiting" way, that it is almost as if we should compare scientifically *Paradise Lost*, the *Prophecies of Isaiah*, and Mat. Lewis's *Tales of Terror*. Goethe has something of the Seer in him, I dare say: all powerful thinkers and writers have: but Religion and Virtue—whether *they* have not even more serious quarrel with the immortal author of Faust, than with him whose productions are now "swept forth as a bundle of dyed rags"—I more than doubt. Goethe's poison is subtler, better disguised, than that of such writers as Kotzebue; but it is the strong-minded Goethes of the age that mould the transiently powerful Kotzebues; and it seems likely enough that the author of The Stranger received some of his French Revolution principles from the author of Werter.

The Present will ever have her special votaries in the world of letters, who collect into their focus, by a kind of burning glass, the feelings of the day. Amongst such Kotzebue holds a high rank. Those "dyed rags" of his once formed gorgeous banners, and flaunted in the eyes of refined companies from London to Madrid, from Paris to Moscow. S. C.]

## LETTER III.

Ratzeburg.

NO little fish thrown back again into the water, no fly unimprisoned from a child's hand, could more buoyantly enjoy its element, than I this clean and peaceful house, with this lovely view of the town, groves, and lake of Ratzeburg, from the window at which I am writing. My spirits certainly, and my health I fancied, were beginning to sink under the noise, dirt, and unwholesome air of our Hamburg hotel. I left it on Sunday, Sept. 23rd. with a letter of introduction from the poet Klopstock, to the *Amtmann* of Ratzeburg. The *Amtmann* received me with kindness, and introduced me to the worthy pastor, who agreed to board and lodge me for any length of time not less than a month. The vehicle, in which I took my place, was considerably larger than an English stage-coach, to which it bore much the same proportion and rude resemblance, that an elephant's ear does to the human. Its top was composed of naked boards of different colours, and seeming to have been parts of different wainscots. Instead of windows there were leathern curtains with a little eye of glass in each: they perfectly answered the purpose of keeping out the prospect and letting in the cold. I could observe little, therefore, but the inns and farm houses at which we stopped. They were all alike, except in size: one great room, like a barn, with a hay-loft over it, the straw and hay dangling in tufts through the boards

which formed the ceiling of the room, and the floor of the loft. From this room, which is paved like a street, sometimes one, sometimes two smaller ones, are enclosed at one end. These are commonly floored. In the large room the cattle, pigs, poultry, men, women, and children, live in amicable community: yet there was an appearance of cleanliness and rustic comfort. One of these houses I measured. It was an hundred feet in length. The apartments were taken off from one corner. Between these and the stalls there was a small interspace, and here the breadth was forty-eight feet, but thirty-two where the stalls were; of course, the stalls were on each side eight feet in depth. The faces of the cows, &c. were turned towards the room; indeed they were in it, so that they had at least the comfort of seeing each other's faces. Stall-feeding is universal in this part of Germany, a practice concerning which the agriculturist and the poet are likely to entertain opposite opinions—or at least, to have very different feelings. The wood-work of these buildings on the outside is left unplastered, as in old houses among us, and, being painted red and green, it cuts and tesselates the buildings very gaily. From within three miles of Hamburg almost to Molln, which is thirty miles from it, the country, as far as I could see it, was a dead flat, only varied by woods. At Molln it became more beautiful. I observed a small lake nearly surrounded with groves, and a palace in view belonging to the King of Great Britain, and inhabited by the Inspector of the Forests. We were nearly the same time in travelling the thirty-five miles from Hamburg to Ratzeburg, as we had been in going from London to Yarmouth, one hundred and twenty-six miles.

The lake of Ratzeburg runs from south to north, about nine miles in length, and varying in breadth from three miles to half a mile. About a mile from the southernmost point it is divided into two, of course very unequal, parts by an island, which, being connected by a bridge and a narrow slip of land with the one shore, and by another bridge of immense length with the other shore, forms a complete isthmus. On this island the town of Ratzeburg is built. The pastor's house or vicarage, together with the *Amtmann's Amtsschreiber's*, and the church, stands near the summit of a hill, which slopes down to the slip of land and the little bridge, from which, through a superb military gate, you step into the island-town of Ratzeburg. This again is itself a little hill, by ascending and descending which, you arrive at the long bridge, and so to the other shore. The water to the south of the town is called the Little Lake, which however almost engrosses the beauties of the whole: the shores being just often enough green and bare to give the proper effect to the magnificent groves which occupy the greater part of their circumference. From the turnings, windings, and indentations of the shore, the views vary almost every ten steps, and the whole has a sort of majestic beauty, a feminine grandeur. At the north of the Great Lake, and peeping over it, I see the seven church towers of Lubec, at the distance of twelve or thirteen miles, yet as distinctly as if they were not three. The only defect in the view is, that Ratzeburg is built entirely of red bricks, and all the houses roofed with red tiles. To the eye, therefore, it presents a clump of brick-dust red. Yet this evening, Oct. 10th. twenty minutes past five, I saw the town perfectly beautiful, and the whole softened down

into *complete keeping*, if I may borrow a term from the painters. The sky over Ratzeburg and all the east was a pure evening blue, while over the west it was covered with light sandy clouds. Hence a deep red light spread over the whole prospect, in undisturbed harmony with the red town, the brown-red woods, and the yellow-red reeds on the skirts of the lake. Two or three boats, with single persons paddling them, floated up and down in the rich light, which not only was itself in harmony with all, but brought all into harmony.

I should have told you that I went back to Hamburg on Thursday (Sept. 27th.) to take leave of my friend, who travels southward, and returned hither on the Monday following. From Empfelde, a village half way from Ratzeburg, I walked to Hamburg through deep sandy roads and a dreary flat: the soil everywhere white, hungry, and excessively pulverised; but the approach to the city is pleasing. Light cool country houses, which you can look through and see the gardens behind them, with arbours and trellis work, and thick vegetable walls, and trees in cloisters and piazzas, each house with neat rails before it, and green seats within the rails. Every object, whether the growth of nature or the work of man, was neat and artificial. It pleased me far better, than if the houses and gardens, and pleasure fields, had been in a nobler taste: for this nobler taste would have been mere apery. The busy, anxious, money-loving merchant of Hamburg could only have adopted, he could not have enjoyed the simplicity of nature. The mind begins to love nature by imitating human conveniences in nature; but this is a step in intellect, though a low one—and were it not so, yet all around me spoke of

innocent enjoyment and sensitive comforts, and I entered with unscrupulous sympathy into the enjoyments and comforts even of the busy, anxious, money-loving merchants of Hamburg. In this charitable and *catholic* mood I reached the vast ramparts of the city. These are huge green cushions, one rising above the other, with trees growing in the interspaces, pledges and symbols of a long peace. Of my return I have nothing worth communicating, except that I took extra post, which answers to posting in England. These north German post chaises are uncovered wicker carts. An English dust-cart is a piece of finery, a *chef d'œuvre* of mechanism, compared with them: and the horses!—a savage might use their ribs instead of his fingers for a numeration table. Wherever we stopped, the postilion fed his cattle with the brown rye bread of which he eat himself, all breakfasting together; only the horses had no gin to their water, and the postilion no water to his gin. Now and henceforward for subjects of more interest to you, and to the objects in search of which I left you: namely, the *literati* and literature of Germany.

Believe me, I walked with an impression of awe on my spirits, as W——— and myself accompanied Mr. Klopstock to the house of his brother, the poet, which stands about a quarter of a mile from the city gate. It is one of a row of little common-place summer-houses, (for so they looked,) with four or five rows of young meagre elm trees before the windows, beyond which is a green, and then a dead flat intersected with several roads. Whatever beauty, (thought I,) may be before the poet's eyes at present, it must certainly be purely of his own creation. We waited a few minutes in a neat little parlour, ornamented with the figures of two of the Muses and with prints, the sub-

jects of which were from Klopstock's odes.[1] The poet entered. I was much disappointed in his countenance, and recognised in it no likeness to the bust. There was no comprehension in the forehead, no weight over the eye-brows, no expression of peculiarity, moral or intellectual, on the eyes, no massiveness in the general countenance. He is, if anything, rather below the middle size. He wore very large half-boots, which his legs filled, so fearfully were they swollen. However, though neither W——— nor myself could discover any indications of sublimity or enthusiasm in his physiognomy, we were both equally impressed with his liveliness, and his kind and ready courtesy. He talked in French with my friend, and with difficulty spoke a few sentences to me in English. His enunciation was not in the least affected by the

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[1] ["There is a rhetorical amplitude and brilliancy in the Messias," says Mr. Carlyle, "which elicits in our critic (Mr. Taylor) an instinct truer than his philosophy is. Neither has the still purer spirit of Klopstock's odes escaped him. Perhaps there is no writing in our language that offers so correct an emblem of him as this analysis." I remember thinking Taylor's "clear outline" of the Messias the most satisfying account of a poem I ever read: it fills the mind with a vision of pomp and magnificence, which it is pleasanter to contemplate, as it were, from afar, massed together in that general survey, than to examine part by part. Mr. Taylor and Mr. Carlyle agree in exalting that ode of Klopstock's, in which he represents the Muse of Britain and the Muse of Germany running a race. The piece seems to me more rhetorical than strictly poetical; and if the younger Muse's power of keeping up the race depends on productions of this sort, I would not give a penny for her chance, at least if the contest relates to pure poetry. Klopstock's *Herman* (mentioned afterwards,) consists of three chorus-dramas, as Mr. Taylor calls them: *The Battle of Herman, Herman and the Princes,* and *The Death of Herman.* Herman is the Arminius of the Roman historians. S. C.]

entire want of his upper teeth. The conversation began on his part by the expression of his rapture at the surrender of the detachment of French troops under General Humbert. Their proceedings in Ireland with regard to the committee which they had appointed, with the rest of their organizing system, seemed to have given the poet great entertainment. He then declared his sanguine belief in Nelson's victory, and anticipated its confirmation with a keen and triumphant pleasure. His words, tones, looks, implied the most vehement Anti-Gallicanism. The subject changed to literature, and I inquired in Latin concerning the history of German poetry and the elder German poets. To my great astonishment he confessed, that he knew very little on the subject. He had indeed occasionally read one or two of their elder writers, but not so as to enable him to speak of their merits. Professor Ebeling, he said, would probably give me every information of this kind: the subject had not particularly excited his curiosity. He then talked of Milton and Glover, and thought Glover's blank verse superiour to Milton's.[2] W—— and

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[2] [*Leonidas*, an epic poem, by R. Glover, first appeared in May, 1737: in the fifth edition, published in 1770, it was corrected and extended from nine books to twelve. Glover was the author of Boadicea and Medea, tragedies, which had some success on the stage. I believe that *Leonidas* has more merit in the conduct of the design, and in the delineation of character, than as poetry.

"He write an epic poem," said Thomson, "who never saw a mountain!" Glover had seen the sun and moon, yet he seems to have looked for their poetical aspects in Homer and Milton, rather than in the sky. "There is not a single simile in *Leonidas*," says Lyttleton, "that is borrowed from any of the ancients, and yet there is hardly any poem that has

myself expressed our surprise: and my friend gave his definition and notion of harmonious verse, that it

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such a variety of beautiful comparisons." The similes of Milton come so flat and dry out of Glover's mangle, that they are indeed quite *another thing* from what they appear in the poems of that Immortal: *ex. gr.*

Like wintry clouds, which, opening for a time,
Tinge their black folds with gleams of scattered light:—

Is not this Milton's "silver lining" stretched and mangled?

The Queen of Night
Gleam'd from the centre of th' etherial vault,
And o'er the raven plumes of darkness shed
Her placid light.

This is flattened from the well-known passage in Comus,

Soon will savage Mars
Deform the lovely *ringlets of thy shrubs.*

A genteel improvement upon Milton's "bush with frizzled hair implicit." Then we have

——————— delicious to the sight
Soft dales meand'ring show their flowery laps
Among rude piles of nature,

spoiled from

——————— the flowery lap
Of some irriguous valley spread its store.

Thus does this poet shatter and dissolve the blooming sprays of another man's plantation, instead of pushing through them some new shoots of his own to crown them with fresh blossoms.

Milton himself borrowed as much as Glover. Aye, ten times more; yet every passage in his poetry is Miltonic,—more that than anything else. On the other hand, his imitators *Miltonize*, yet produce nothing worthy of Milton, the important characteristic of whose writings my father well expressed, when he said "The reader of Milton must be always on his

consisted, (the English iambic blank verse above all,) in the apt arrangement of pauses and cadences, and the sweep of whole paragraphs,

> ——————" with many a winding bout
> Of linked sweetness long drawn out,"

and not in the even flow, much less in the prominence or antithetic vigour, of single lines, which were indeed injurious to the total effect, except where they were introduced for some specific purpose. Klopstock assented, and said that he meant to confine Glover's superiority to single lines.[3] He told us that he had read Milton, in a prose translation, when he was four-

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duty: *he is surrounded with sense.*" A man must have his sense to imitate him worthily. How we look through his words at the Deluge, as he floods it upon us in Book xi. l. 738-53!—The Attic bees produce honey so flavoured with the thyme of Hymettus that it is scarcely eatable, though to smell the herb itself in a breezy walk upon that celebrated Mount would be an exceeding pleasure; thus certain epic poems are overpoweringly flavoured with herbs of Milton, while yet the fragrant balm and fresh breeze of his poetry is not to be found in them. S. C.]

[3] [The "abrupt and laconic structure" of Glover's periods appears at the very commencement of *Leonidas*, which has something military in its movement, but rather the stiff gait of the drilled soldier than the proud march of the martial hero.

> The virtuous Spartan who resign'd his life
> To save his country at th' Oetæan straits,
> Thermopylæ, when all the peopled east
> In arms with Xerxes filled the Grecian plains,
> O Muse record! The Hellespont they passed
> O'erpowering Thrace. The dreadful tidings swift
> To Corinth flew. Her Isthmus was the seat
> Of Grecian council. Orpheus thence returns
> To Lacedæmon. In assembly full, &c.

teen.[4] I understood him thus myself, and W——— interpreted Klopstock's French as I had already construed it. He appeared to know very little of Milton or indeed of our poets in general. He spoke with great indignation of the English prose translation of

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Glover's best passages are of a soft character. This is a pleasing *Homerism*:

Lycis dies,
For boist'rous war ill-chosen. He was skill'd
To tune the lulling flute, and melt the heart;
Or with his pipe's awak'ning strains allure
The lovely dames of Lydia to the dance.
They on the verdant level graceful mov'd
In vary'd measures; while the cooling breeze
Beneath their swelling garments wanton'd o'er
Their snowy breasts, and smooth Cayster's streams
Soft-gliding murmur'd by. The hostile blade, &c.
Bk. VIII.

And here is a pleasing expansion of Pindar, Olymp. II. 109:

Placid were his days,
Which flow'd through blessings. As a river pure,
Whose sides are flowery, and whose meadows fair,
Meets in his course a subterranean void;
There dips his silver head, again to rise,
And, rising, glide through flow'rs and meadows new;
So shall Oïleus in those happier fields,
Where never tempests roar, nor humid clouds
In mists dissolve, nor white descending flakes
Of winter violate th' eternal green;
Where never gloom of trouble shades the mind,
Nor gust of passion heaves the quiet breast,
Nor dews of grief are sprinkled. Bk. X. S. C.]

[4] This was accidentally confirmed to me by an old German gentleman at Helmstadt, who had been Klopstock's school and bed-fellow. Among other boyish anecdotes, he related that the young poet set a particular value on a translation of the PARADISE LOST, and always slept with it under his pillow.

his MESSIAH. All the translations had been bad, very bad—but the English was *no* translation—there were pages on pages not in the original:—and half the original was not to be found in the translation. W——— told him that I intended to translate a few of his odes as specimens of German lyrics—he then said to me in English, "I wish you would render into English some select passages of THE MESSIAH, and *revenge* me of your countryman!" It was the liveliest thing which he produced in the whole conversation. He told us, that his first ode was fifty years older than his last. I looked at him with much emotion—I considered him as the venerable father of German poetry; as a good man; as a Christian; seventy-four years old; with legs enormously swollen; yet active, lively, cheerful, and kind, and communicative. My eyes felt as if a tear were swelling into them. In the portrait of Lessing there was a toupee periwig, which enormously injured the effect of his physiognomy—Klopstock wore the same, powdered and frizzled. By the bye, old men ought never to wear powder—the contrast between a large snow-white wig and the colour of an old man's skin is disgusting, and wrinkles in such a neighbourhood appear only channels for dirt. It is an honour to poets and great men, that you think of them as parts of nature; and anything of trick and fashion wounds you in them, as much as when you see venerable yews clipped into miserable peacocks.—The author of THE MESSIAH should have worn his own grey hair.—His powder and periwig were to the eye what *Mr.* Virgil would be to the ear.

Klopstock dwelt much on the superiour power which the German language possessed of concentrating meaning. He said, he had often translated parts of Homer

and Virgil, line by line, and a German line proved always sufficient for a Greek or Latin one. In English you cannot do this. I answered, that in English we could commonly render one Greek heroic line in a line and a half of our common heroic metre, and I conjectured that this line and a half would be found to contain no more syllables than one German or Greek hexameter. He did not understand me:[5] and

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[5] Klopstock's observation was partly true and partly erroneous. In the literal sense of his words, and, if we confine the comparison to the average of space required for the expression of the same thought in the two languages, it is erroneous. I have translated some German hexameters into English hexameters, and find, that on the average three English lines will express four lines German. The reason is evident: our language abounds in monosyllables and dissyllables. The German, not less than the Greek, is a polysyllable language. But in another point of view the remark was not without foundation. For the German possessing the same unlimited privilege of forming compounds, both with prepositions and with epithets, as the Greek, it can express the richest single Greek word in a single German one, and is thus freed from the necessity of weak or ungraceful paraphrases. I will content myself with one example at present, viz. the use of the prefixed participles *ver, zer, ent,* and *weg:* thus *reissen* to rend, *verreissen* to rend away, *zerreissen* to rend to pieces, *entreissen* to rend off or out of a thing, in the active sense: or *schmelzen* to melt—*ver, zer, ent, schmelzen*—and in like manner through all the verbs neuter and active. If you consider only how much we should feel the loss of the prefix *be,* as in bedropt, besprinkle, besot, especially in our poetical language, and then think that this same mode of composition is carried through all their simple and compound prepositions, and many of their adverbs; and that with most of these the Germans have the same privilege as we have of dividing them from the verb and placing them at the end of the sentence; you will have no difficulty in comprehending the reality and the cause of this superiour power in the German of condensing meaning, in which its great poet exulted. It is im-

I, who wished to hear his opinions, not to correct them, was glad that he did not.

We now took our leave. At the beginning of the French Revolution Klopstock wrote odes of congratulation. He received some honorary presents from the French Republic, (a golden crown I believe), and, like our Priestley, was invited to a seat in the legislature, which he declined. But when French liberty metamorphosed herself into a fury, he sent back these presents with a *palinodia*, declaring his abhorrence of their proceedings: and since then he has been perhaps more than enough an Anti-Gallican. I mean, that in his just contempt and detestation of the crimes and follies of the Revolutionists, he suffers himself to forget that the revolution itself is a process of the Divine Providence; and that as the folly of men is the wisdom of God, so are their iniquities instruments of his goodness. From Klopstock's house we walked to the ramparts, discoursing together on the poet and his conversation, till our attention was diverted to the

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possible to read half a dozen pages of Wieland without perceiving that in this respect the German has no rival but the Greek. And yet I feel, that concentration or condensation is not the happiest mode of expressing this excellence, which seems to consist not so much in the less time required for conveying an impression, as in the unity and simultaneousness with which the impression is conveyed. It tends to make their language more picturesque: it *depictures* images better. We have obtained this power in part by our compound verbs derived from the Latin: and the sense of its great effect no doubt induced our Milton both to the use and the abuse of Latin derivatives. But still these prefixed particles, conveying no separate or separable meaning to the mere English reader, cannot possibly act on the mind with the force or liveliness of an original and homogeneous language such as the German is, and besides are confined to certain words.

beauty and singularity of the sunset and its effects on the objects around us. There were woods in the distance. A rich sandy light, (nay, of a much deeper colour than sandy,) lay over these woods that blackened in the blaze. Over that part of the woods which lay immediately under the intenser light, a brassy mist floated. The trees on the ramparts, and the people moving to and fro between them, were cut or divided into equal segments of deep shade and brassy light. Had the trees, and the bodies of the men and women, been divided into equal segments by a rule or pair of compasses, the portions could not have been more regular. All else was obscure. It was a fairy scene!—and to increase its romantic character, among the moving objects, thus divided into alternate shade and brightness, was a beautiful child, dressed with the elegant simplicity of an English child, riding on a stately goat, the saddle, bridle, and other accoutrements of which were in a high degree costly and splendid. Before I quit the subject of Hamburg, let me say, that I remained a day or two longer than I otherwise should have done, in order to be present at the feast of St. Michael, the patron saint of Hamburg, expecting to see the civic pomp of this commercial Republic. I was however disappointed. There were no processions, two or three sermons were preached to two or three old women in two or three churches, and St. Michael and his patronage wished elsewhere by the higher classes, all places of entertainment, theatre, &c. being shut up on this day. In Hamburg, there seems to be no religion at all; in Lubec it is confined to the women. The men seem determined to be divorced from their wives in the other world, if they cannot in this. You will not easily conceive a more singular sight, than is presented by the vast aisle

of the principal church at Lubec seen from the organ-loft: for, being filled with female servants and persons in the same class of life, and all their caps having gold and silver cauls, it appears like a rich pavement of gold and silver.

I will conclude this letter with the mere transcription of notes, which my friend W——— made of his conversations with Klopstock, during the interviews that took place after my departure. On these I shall make but one remark at present, and that will appear a presumptuous one, namely, that Klopstock's remarks on the venerable sage of Königsburg are to my own knowledge injurious and mistaken; and so far is it from being true, that his system is now given up, that throughout the Universities of Germany there is not a single professor who is not either a Kantean or a disciple of Fichte, whose system is built on the Kantean, and presupposes its truth; or lastly who, though an antagonist of Kant, as to his theoretical work, has not embraced wholly or in part his moral system, and adopted part of his nomenclature. "Klopstock having wished to see the CALVARY of Cumberland, and asked what was thought of it in England, I went to Remnant's (the English bookseller) where I procured the Analytical Review, in which is contained the review of Cumberland's CALVARY. I remembered to have read there some specimens of a blank verse translation of THE MESSIAH. I had mentioned this to Klopstock, and he had a great desire to see them. I walked over to his house and put the book into his hands. On adverting to his own poem, he told me he began THE MESSIAH when he was seventeen: he devoted three entire years to the plan without composing a single line. He was greatly at a loss in what manner to execute his work. There were no successful speci-

mens of versification in the German language before this time. The first three cantos he wrote in a species of measured or numerous prose. This, though done with much labour and some success, was far from satisfying him. He had composed hexameters both Latin and Greek as a school exercise, and there had been also in the German language attempts in that style of versification. These were only of very moderate merit.—One day he was struck with the idea of what could be done in this way—he kept his room a whole day, even went without his dinner, and found that in the evening he had written twenty-three hexameters, versifying a part of what he had before written in prose. From that time, pleased with his efforts, he composed no more in prose. To-day he informed me that he had finished his plan before he read Milton. He was enchanted to see an author who before him had trod the same path. This is a contradiction of what he said before. He did not wish to speak of his poem to any one till it was finished: but some of his friends who had seen what he had finished, tormented him till he had consented to publish a few books in a journal. He was then, I believe, very young, about twenty-five. The rest was printed at different periods, four books at a time. The reception given to the first specimens was highly flattering. He was nearly thirty years in finishing the whole poem, but of these thirty years not more than two were employed in the composition. He only composed in favourable moments; besides he had other occupations. He values himself upon the plan of his odes, and accuses the modern lyrical writers of gross deficiency in this respect. I laid the same accusation against Horace: he would not hear of it—but waived the discussion. He called Rousseau's ODE TO FORTUNE a moral dissertation in

stanzas.[5] I spoke of Dryden's ST. CECILIA; but he did not seem familiar with our writers. He wished to

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[5] [À la Fortune. Liv. II. Ode vi. Œuvres de Jean Baptiste Rousseau, p. 121, edit. 1820. One of the latter strophes of this ode concludes with two lines, which, as the editor observes, have become a proverb, and of which the thought and expression are borrowed from Lucretius: *eripitur persona, manet res:* III. v. 58.

Montrez nous, guerriers magnanimes,
Votre vertu dans tout son jour:
Voyons comment vos cœurs sublimes
Du sort soutiendront le retour.
Tant que sa faveur vous seconde,
Vous êtes les maîtres du monde,
Votre gloire nous ébloüit:
Mais au moindre revers funeste,
*Le masque tombe, l'homme reste,*
*Et le héros s'évanouit.*

Horace, says the Editor, en traitant ce même sujet, liv. x. ode xxxv. et Pindare en l'esquissant à grands traits, au commencement de sa douzième Olympique, n'ayoient laissé à leurs successeurs que son côté moral à envisager, et c'est le parti que prit Rousseau. The general sentiment of the ode is handled with great dignity in Paradise Regained. Bk. III. l. 43—157—a passage which, as Thyer says, contains the quintessence of the subject. Dante has some noble lines on Fortune in the viith canto of the *Inferno*,—lines worthy of a great mystic poet. After referring to the vain complaints and maledictions of men against this Power, he beautifully concludes:

. . . . .
Ma ella s'è beata e ciò non ode:
Con l'altre prime creature lieta
*Volve sua spera, e beata si gode.*

J. B. Rousseau was born in 1669, began his career at the close of the age of Louis Quatorze, died at Brussels, March 17, 1741. He had been banished from France, by an intrigue, on a false charge, as now seems clear, of having composed and distributed defamatory verses, in 1712; and it was engraved upon his

know the distinctions between our dramatic and epic blank verse. He recommended me to read his HERMANN before I read either THE MESSIAH or the odes. He flattered himself that some time or other his dramatic poems would be known in England. He had not heard of Cowper. He thought that Voss in his translation of THE ILIAD had done violence to the idiom of the Germans, and had sacrificed it to the Greeks, not remembering sufficiently that each language has its particular spirit and genius.[6] He said

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tomb that he was "thirty years an object of envy and thirty of compassion." Belonging to the classical school of the 17th century, of which he was the last survivor, he came somewhat into conflict with the spirit of the 18th, which was preparing a new vintage, and would have none but new wine in new bottles. Rousseau, however, was a very finished writer in his way, and has been compared to Pindar, Horace, Anacreon and Malherbe. His ode to *M. le Comte du Luc* is as fine an example as I know of the modern classical style. This is quite different from that which is exemplified in Mr. Wordsworth's Laodamia and Sergeant Talfourd's Ion; for in them the subjects only are ancient, while both the form and spirit are modern; whereas in the odes of Rousseau a modern subject is treated, as far as difference of times and language will allow, in the manner and tone of the Ancients. Samson Agonistes and Goethe's Iphigenia in Tauris are conformed to ancient modes of thought, but in them the subject also is taken from antiquity. Rousseau's works consist of Odes, Epistles in verse, Cantatas, Epigrams, &c. &c. He wrote for the stage at the beginning of his literary life, but with no great success. S. C.]

[6] [Voss, who lived from Feb. 20, 1751, to March, 1826, was author of the Luise "a rural epopæa of simple structure divided into three idyls, which relate the betrothment and marriage of the heroine." This is a pleasing and very peculiar poem, composed in hexameter verse. "The charm of the narrative," says Mr. T. "consists in the minute description of the local domestic manners of the personages." The charm consists, I think, in the blending of these manners with the beauty of na-

Lessing was the first of their dramatic writers. I complained of NATHAN as tedious. He said there was not enough of action in it; but that Lessing was the most chaste of their writers. He spoke favourably of Goethe; but said that his SORROWS OF WERTER was his best work, better than any of his dramas: he preferred the first written to the rest of Goethe's dramas. Schiller's ROBBERS he found so extravagant, that he could not read it. I spoke of the scene of the setting sun.[7] He did not know it. He said Schiller could not live. He thought DON CARLOS the best of his dramas; but said that the plot was inextricable. —It was evident he knew little of Schiller's works: indeed, he said, he could not read them. Bürger, he said, was a true poet, and would live; that Schiller, on the contrary, must soon be forgotten; that he gave himself up to the imitation of Shakespeare, who often was extravagant, but that Schiller was ten thousand times more so.[8] He spoke very slightingly of Kotze-

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ture, and the ease and suitability of the versification. Voss's translation of the Odyssey is praised for being so perfect an imitation of the original. The Greek has been rendered, "with a fidelity and imitative harmony so admirable, that it suggests to the scholar the original wording, and reflects, as from a mirror, every beauty and every blemish of the ancient poem." Hist. Survey, pp. 61-68. S. C.]

[7] [Act III. Sc. 2. The night scene, which is the 5th of Act iv. is fine too in a frantic way. The songs it contains are very spirited. That sung by the Robbers is worthy of a Thug: it goes beyond our notions of any European bandit, and transports us to the land of Jaggernat. S. C.]

[8] [The works of Bürger, who was born on the first day of 1748, died June 8, 1794, consist of Poems (2 vols.), Macbeth altered from Shakespeare, (pronounced by Taylor,—no good judge of *Shakespeare*,—in some respects superiour to the original,) Munchaüsen's Travels; Translations; (of the six first books of the

bue, as an immoral author in the first place, and next, as deficient in power. At Vienna, said he, they are transported with him; but we do not reckon the people of Vienna either the wisest or the wittiest people of Germany. He said Wieland was a charming author, and a sovereign master of his own language: that in this respect Goethe could not be compared to him, nor indeed could any body else. He said that his fault was to be fertile to exuberance. I told him the OBERON had just been translated into English. He asked me if I was not delighted with the poem. I answered, that I thought the story began to flag about the seventh or eighth book; and observed, that it was unworthy

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Iliad, and some others); Papers philological and political. His fame rests chiefly on three ballads, The Wild Hunter, The Parson's Daughter, and Lenore. The powerful diction and admirable harmony,—rhythm, sound, rhyme of these compositions Mr. Taylor describes as the result of laborious art; it strikes me, from the outline which he has given of Bürger's history, that the violent feelings, the life-like expression of which constitutes their power and value, may have been partly the reflex of the poet's own mind. His seems to have been a life of mismanagement from youth till middle age. Like Milton, he lost a beloved second wife by childbed in the first year of marriage: like him, he married a third time, but without his special necessity —blindness and unkind daughters. He wedded a lady who had fallen in love with his poetry, or perhaps his poetical reputation: an union founded, as it appears, in vanity, ended in vexation of spirit: and as Death, which had deprived him of two wives, did not release him from a third, he obtained his freedom, at the end of little more than three years, from a court of justice. Why did Klopstock undervalue, by preference of such a poet, the lofty-minded Schiller—the dearest to England of all German bards? Perhaps because the author of Wallenstein was a philosopher, and had many things in his philosophy which the author of The Messiah could not find in *his* heaven and earth. S. C.]

of a man of genius to make the interest of a long poem turn entirely upon animal gratification. He seemed at first disposed to excuse this by saying, that there are different subjects for poetry, and that poets are not willing to be restricted in their choice. I answered, that I thought the *passion* of love as well suited to the purposes of poetry as any other passion; but that it was a cheap way of pleasing to fix the attention of the reader through a long poem on the mere *appetite.* Well! but, said he, you see, that such poems please every body. I answered, that it was the province of a great poet to raise people up to his own level, not to descend to theirs. He agreed, and confessed, that on no account whatsoever would he have written a work like the OBERON. He spoke in raptures of Wieland's style, and pointed out the passage where Retzia is delivered of her child, as exquisitely beautiful.[9] I said that I did not perceive any very striking passages; but that I made allowance for the imperfections of a translation. Of the thefts of Wieland, he said, they were so exquisitely managed, that the greatest writers might be proud to steal as he did. He considered the books

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[9] [Oberon, Canto viii. stanzas 69-80. The little touch about the new born babe's returning its mother's kiss is very romantic: though put modestly in the form of a query:

—Und scheint nicht jeden Kuss
Sein kleiner mund dem ihren zu entsaugen?

The word *entsaugen* (*suck off*) is expressive—it very naturally characterizes the kiss of an infant five minutes of age. Wieland had great nursery experience. "My sweetest hours," says he, in a letter quoted in the Survey, "are those in which I see about me, in all their glee of childhood, my whole posse of little half-way things between apes and angels."

Mr. Sotheby's translation of the Oberon made the poem popular in this country. The original first appeared in 1780. S. C.]

and fables of old romance writers in the light of the ancient mythology, as a sort of common property, from which a man was free to take whatever he could make a good use of. An Englishman had presented him with the odes of Collins, which he had read with pleasure. He knew little or nothing of Gray, except his ELEGY written in a country CHURCH-YARD. He complained of the fool in LEAR. I observed that he seemed to give a terrible wildness to the distress; but still he complained. He asked whether it was not allowed, that Pope had written rhymed poetry with more skill than any of our writers—I said I preferred Dryden, because his couplets had greater variety in their movement. He thought my reason a good one; but asked whether the rhyme of Pope were not more exact. This question I understood as applying to the final terminations, and observed to him that I believed it was the case; but that I thought it was easy to excuse some inaccuracy in the final sounds, if the general sweep of the verse was superiour. I told him that we were not so exact with regard to the final endings of lines as the French. He did not seem to know that we made no distinction between masculine and feminine (i. e. single or double,) rhymes: at least he put inquiries to me on this subject. He seemed to think, that no language could be so far formed as that it might not be enriched by idioms borrowed from another tongue. I said this was a very dangerous practice; and added, that I thought Milton had often injured both his prose and verse by taking this liberty too frequently. I recommended to him the prose works of Dryden as models of pure and native English. I was treading upon tender ground, as I have reason to suppose that he has himself liberally indulged in the practice.

The same day I dined at Mr. Klopstock's, where I had the pleasure of a third interview with the poet. We talked principally about indifferent things. I asked him what he thought of Kant. He said that his reputation was much on the decline in Germany. That for his own part he was not surprised to find it so, as the works of Kant were to him utterly incomprehensible—that he had often been pestered by the Kanteans; but was rarely in the practice of arguing with them. His custom was to produce the book, open it and point to a passage, and beg they would explain it. This they ordinarily attempted to do by substituting their own ideas. I do not want, I say, an explanation of your own ideas, but of the passage which is before us. In this way I generally bring the dispute to an immediate conclusion. He spoke of Wolfe as the first Metaphysician they had in Germany. Wolfe had followers; but they could hardly be called a sect, and luckily till the appearance of Kant, about fifteen years ago, Germany had not been pestered by any sect of philosophers whatsoever; but that each man had separately pursued his inquiries uncontrolled by the dogmas of a master. Kant had appeared ambitious to be the founder of a sect; that he had succeeded: but that the Germans were now coming to their senses again. That Nicolai and Engel had in different ways contributed to disenchant the nation;[10] but above all the incomprehensibility of the philosopher and his philosophy. He seemed pleased to hear, that as yet Kant's doctrines had not met with many admirers in England—did not doubt but that we had too much wisdom to be duped by a writer who set at defiance the common sense and com-

[10] [See note at the end of the letter. S. C.]

mon understandings of men. We talked of tragedy. He seemed to rate highly the power of exciting tears —I said that nothing was more easy than to deluge an audience, that it was done every day by the meanest writers."

I must remind you, my friend, first, that these notes are not intended as specimens of Klopstock's intellectual power, or even "*colloquial prowess*," to judge of which by an accidental conversation, and this with strangers, and those too foreigners, would be not only unreasonable, but calumnious. Secondly, I attribute little other interest to the remarks than what is derived from the celebrity of the person who made them. Lastly, if you ask me, whether I have read THE MESSIAH, and what I think of it? I answer—as yet the first four books only: and as to my opinion—(the reasons of which hereafter)—you may guess it from what I could not help muttering to myself, when the good pastor this morning told me, that Klopstock was the German Milton——"a very *German* Milton indeed!!!"——Heaven preserve you, and

S. T. COLERIDGE.

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[These *disenchanters* put one in mind of the ratcatchers, who are said and supposed to rid houses of rats, and yet the rats, somehow or other, continue to swarm. The Kanteun rats were not aware, I believe, when Klopstock spoke thus, of the extermination that had befallen them: and even to this day those acute animals infest the old house, and steal away the daily bread of the children,—if the old notions of Space and Time, and the old proofs of religious verities by way of the *understanding* and *speculative reason*, must be called such. Whether or no these are their true spiritual sustenance, or the necessary guard and vehicle of it, is perhaps a question.

But who were Nicolai and Engel, and what did they against the famous enchanter? The former was born in 1733, at Ber-

lin, where he carried on his father's business of book-selling, pursued literature with marked success, and attained to old age, full of literary honours. By means of three critical journals (the *Literatur-Briefe*, the *Bibliothek der Schönen Wissenschaftern*, and the *Allgemeine deutsche Bibliothek*,) which he conducted with the powerful co-operation of Lessing, and of his intimate friend Mendelssohn, and to which he contributed largely himself, he became very considerable in the German world of letters, and so continued for the space of twenty years. Jördens, in his Lexicon, speaks highly of the effect of Nicolai's writings in promoting freedom of thought, enlightened views in theology and philosophy, and a sound taste in fine literature —describes him as a brave battler with intolerance, hypocrisy, and confused conceptions in religion; with empty subtleties, obscurities, and terminologies, that can but issue in vain fantasies, in his controversial writings on the "so-named critical philosophy." He engaged with the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, on its appearance in 1781, in the *Allgemeine deutsche Bibliothek*; first explained his objections to it in the 11th vol. of his *Reisebeschreibung*, (Description of a Journey through Germany and Switzerland in the year 1781,) and afterwards, in his romance entitled The Life and Opinions of Sempronius Gundibert, a German Philosopher, sought to set forth the childish crotchets and abuses imputable to many disciples of this philosophy in their native absurdity. The *ratsbone* alluded to by Klopstock, was doubtless contained in the above-named romance, which the old poet probably esteemed more than Nicolai's more serious polemics.

Gundibert has had its day, but in a fiction destined to a day of longer duration,—Goethe's Faust,—the Satirist is himself most effectively satirized. There he is, in that strange yet beautiful temple, pinned to the wall in a ridiculous attitude, to be laughed at as long as the temple itself is visited and admired. This doom came upon him, not so much for his campaign against the Kanteans, as for his *Joys of Werter*,—because he had dared to ridicule a book, which certainly offered no small temptations to the parodist. Indeed he seems to have been engaged in a series of hostilities with Fichte, Lavater, Wieland, Herder, and Goethe.[11] In the *Walpurgisnacht*

[11] [See Mr. Hayward's excellent translation of Faust, of which I have heard a literary German say that it gave a better notion of the original than any other which he had seen.]

of the Faust he thus addresses the goblin dancers:—

Ihr seyd noch immer da! Nein das ist unerhört!
Verschwindet doch! Wir haben ja aufgeklärt!

"Fly!

Vanish! Unheard of impudence! What, still there!
In this enlightened age too, when you have been
Proved not to exist?"—*Shelley's Translation.*

Do we not see the doughty reviewer before us magisterially waving his hand and commanding the apparitions to vanish?—then with despondent astonishment exclaiming:

Das Teufelspack es fragt nach keiner Regel.
Wir sind so klug und dennoch spukt's in Tegel.

So wise we are! yet what fantastic fooleries still stream forth from my contemporary's brains; how are we still haunted! The speech of Faust concerning him is mis-translated by Shelley, who understood the humour of the piece, as well as the poetry, but not the particular humours of it. Nothing can be more expressive of a conceited, narrow-minded reviewer. "Oh he!—he is absolutely every where,—What others dance, he must decide upon. If he can't chatter about every step, 'tis as good as not made at all. *Nothing provokes him so much as when we go forward.* If you'd turn round and round in a circle, as he does in his old mill, he'd approve of that perhaps; especially if you'd consult him about it."

"A man of such spirited habitudes," says Mr. Carlyle, after affirming that Nicolai wrote against Kant's philosophy without comprehending it, and judged of poetry, as of Brunswick Mum, by its utility, "is now by the Germans called a *Philister.* Nicolai earned for himself the painful pre-eminence of being *Erz Philister,* Arch Philistine." "He, an old enemy of Goethe's," says Mr. Hill, in explanation of the title in which he appears in the *Walpurgisnacht,* "had published an account of his phantasmal illusions, pointing them against Fichte's system of idealism, which he evidently confounded with what Coleridge would have called Subjective Idolism."

Such was this wondrous *disenchanter* in the eyes of later critics than Klopstock: a man strong enough to maintain a long fight against genius, not wise enough to believe in it and befriend it. How many a controversialist seems a mighty giant to those who are predisposed to his opinions, while, in the eyes of others, he is but a blind floundering Polyphemus, who knows

not how to direct his heavy blows; if not a menacing scarecrow, with a stake in his hand, which he has no power to drive home! I remember reading a thin volume in which all metaphysicians that had ever left their thoughts behind them were declared utterly in the wrong—all up to, but not including, the valiant author himself. The world had lain in darkness till he appeared, like a new Phœbus, on the scene. This great man despatched Kant's system—(never having read a syllable of any work of Kant's)—in a page and a quarter; and the exploit had its celebraters and admirers. Yet strange to say, the metaphysical world went on just as if nothing had happened!—after the sun was up, it went groping about, as if it had never been enlightened, and actually ever since has continued to talk as if Locke, Berkeley, Hume, Kant, and other metaphysicians understood the nature of the things they wrote about rather *more* than the mass of mankind, instead of *less! Verschwindet doch!* might this author say, as Nicolai said to the spectres of the Brocken and the phantoms of literature,

Verschwindet doch! *Wir haben ja aufgeklärt.*

Engel opposed Kant in philosophical treatises, one of which is entitled *Zwei Gerpräche den Werth der Kritik betreffend.* He too occupied a considerable space in Literature—his works fill twelve volumes, besides a few other pieces. "To him," says Jördens, "the criticism of taste and of art, speculative, practical, and popular philosophy, owe many of their later advances in Germany." Jördens pronounces his romance, entitled *Lorenz Stark*, a masterpiece in its way, and says of his plays, that they deserve a place beside the best of Lessing's. He was the author of a miscellaneous work, entitled The Philosopher for the World, and is praised by Cousin as a meritorious anthropologist. Engel was born September 11, 1741, at Parchim, of which his father was pastor, in Mecklenburg-Schwerin; died June 28, 1802. Neither Nicolai nor Engel is noticed by Cousin among the adversaries of Kant's doctrine: the intelligent adversaries,—who assailed it with skill and knowledge, rather proved its strength than discovered its weakness. *Fortius acri ridiculum;* but this applies only to transient triumphs, where the object of attack, though it furnishes *occasion* for ridicule, affords no just *cause* for it. S. C.]

## CHAPTER X.

*Quid quod præfatione præmunierim libellum, quâ conor omnem offendiculi ansam præcidere?*[1] *Neque quicquam addubito, quin ea candidis omnibus faciat satis. Quid autem facias istis, qui vel ob ingenii pertinaciam sibi satisfieri nolint, vel stupidiores sint, quam ut satisfactionem intelligant? Nam quemadmodum Simonides dixit, Thessalos hebetiores esse, quam ut possint a se decipi, ita quosdam videas stupidiores, quam ut placari queant. Adhæc, non mirum est invenire quod calumnietur, qui nihil aliud quærit, nisi quod calumnietur.*

ERASMUS *ad Dorpium, Theologum.*

IN the *rifacimento* of THE FRIEND, I have inserted extracts from the CONCIONES AD POPULUM, printed, though scarcely published, in the year 1795, in the very heat and height of my anti-ministerial enthusiasm: these in proof that my principles of *politics* have sustained no change.—In the present chapter, I have annexed to my Letters from Germany, with particular reference to that, which contains a disquisition on the modern drama, a critique on the Tragedy of BERTRAM, written within the last twelve months: in proof, that I have been as falsely charged with any fickleness in my principles of *taste*.—The letter was written to a friend: and the apparent abruptness with which it begins, is owing to the omission of the introductory sentences.

You remember, my dear Sir, that Mr. Whitbread, shortly before his death, proposed to the assembled subscribers of Drury Lane Theatre, that the concern

[1] *Præcludere calumniam*, in the original.

should be farmed to some responsible individual under certain conditions and limitations: and that his proposal was rejected, not without indignation, as subversive of the main object, for the attainment of which the enlightened and patriotic assemblage of philodramatists had been induced to risk their subscriptions. Now this object was avowed to be no less than the redemption of the British stage not only from horses, dogs, elephants, and the like zoological rarities, but also from the more pernicious barbarisms and Kotzebuisms in morals and taste. Drury Lane was to be restored to its former classical renown; Shakespeare, Jonson, and Otway, with the expurgated muses of Vanbrugh, Congreve, and Wycherley, were to be re-inaugurated in their rightful dominion over British audiences;[2] and the Herculean process was to com-

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[2] [My eldest brother says of Congreve's comedies, after declaring them "considerably more decorous than those of his predecessors," "They are too cold to be mischievous: they keep the brain in too incessant action to allow the passions to kindle. For those who search into the powers of intellect, the combinations of thought which may be produced by volition, the plays of Congreve may form a profitable study. But their time is fled—on the stage they will be received no more; and of the devotees of light reading such as could read them without disgust would probably peruse them with little pleasure."—Worthies of Yorkshire and Lancashire, by Hartley Coleridge. p. 693.

My father says, in a marginal note on the Life from which I quote, "Wickedness is no subject for Comedy. This was Congreve's great error, and almost peculiar to him. The *Dramatis Personæ* of Dryden, Wycherley, and others, are often vicious, indecent, but, not like Congreve's, *wicked*."

Speaking of *The Way of the World*, my brother says, "It has no moral interest. Vice may be, and too often has been, made interesting; but cold-hearted, unprincipled villany, never can. —It is impossible to read this comedy without wonder and admiration; but it is an admiration altogether intellectual, by

mence, by exterminating the speaking monsters imported from the banks of the Danube, compared with which their mute relations, the emigrants from Exeter 'Change, and Polito (late Pidcock's) show-carts, were tame and inoffensive. Could an heroic project, at once so refined and so arduous, be consistently entrusted to, could its success be rationally expected from, a mercenary manager, at whose critical quarantine the *lucri bonus odor* would conciliate a bill of health to the plague in person? No! As the work proposed, such must be the work-masters. Rank, fortune, liberal education, and (their natural accompaniments, or consequences) critical discernment, delicate tact, disinterestedness, unsuspected morals, notorious patriotism, and tried Mæcenasship, these were the recommendations that influenced the votes of the proprietary subscribers of Drury-Lane Theatre, these the motives that occasioned the election of its Supreme Committee of Management. This circumstance alone would have excited a strong interest in the public mind, respecting the first production of the Tragic Muse which had been announced under such auspices, and had passed the ordeal of such judgments: and the tragedy, on which you have requested my judgment, was the work on which the great expectations, justified by so many causes, were doomed at length to settle.

But before I enter on the examination of BERTRAM, or THE CASTLE OF ST. ALDOBRAND, I shall interpose a few words, on the phrase *German Drama*, which I hold to be altogether a misnomer. At the

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which no man is made better." My father remarks, in the margin, "Virtue and Wickedness are not *sub eodem genere*. The absence of *Virtue* is no deficiency in a genuine comedy: but the presence of Wickedness a great defect." S. C.]

time of Lessing, the German stage, such as it was, appears to have been a flat and servile copy of the French. It was Lessing who first introduced the name and the works of Shakespeare to the admiration of the Germans; and I should not perhaps go too far, if I add, that it was Lessing who first proved to all thinking men, even to Shakespeare's own countrymen, the true nature of his apparent irregularities. These, he demonstrated, were deviations only from the *accidents* of the Greek tragedy; and from such accidents as hung a heavy weight on the wings of the Greek poets, and narrowed their flight within the limits of what we may call the *heroic opera*. He proved, that, in all the essentials of art, no less than in the truth of nature, the Plays of Shakespeare were incomparably more coincident with the principles of Aristotle, than the productions of Corneille and Racine, notwithstanding the boasted regularity of the latter.[3] Under these convictions were Lessing's own dramatic works composed. Their deficiency is in depth and imagination: their excellence is in the construction of the plot; the good sense of the sentiments; the sobriety of the morals; and the high polish of the diction and dialogue. In short, his dramas are the very antipodes of all those which it has been the fashion of late years at once to abuse and enjoy, under the name of the German drama. Of this latter, Schiller's ROBBERS was the earliest specimen; the first fruits of his youth, (I had almost said of his boyhood), and as such, the pledge, and promise of no ordinary genius. Only as *such*, did the maturer judgment of the author tolerate the Play.

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[3] [See his *Hamburgische Dramaturgie*, especially Vol. II. Works, 1841, Vol. VII. S. C.]

During his whole life he expressed himself concerning this production with more than needful asperity, as a monster not less offensive to good taste, than to sound morals; and, in his latter years, his indignation at the unwonted popularity of the ROBBERS seduced him into the *contrary* extremes, viz. a studied feebleness of interest, (as far as the interest was to be derived from incidents and the excitement of curiosity); a diction elaborately metrical; the affectation of rhymes; and the pedantry of the chorus.

But to understand the true character of the ROBBERS, and of the countless imitations which were its spawn, I must inform you, or at least call to your recollection, that, about that time, and for some years before it, three of the most popular books in the German language were, the translations of YOUNG'S NIGHT THOUGHTS, HERVEY'S MEDITATIONS, and RICHARDSON'S CLARISSA HARLOW.[4] Now we have

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[4] [Night I. of *The Complaint:* or *Night Thoughts*, was before the world in 1742: Hervey's *Meditations among the Tombs, and Reflections in a Flower Garden*, appeared in 1746: the first two vols. of Clarissa in 1748. This work of Richardson's and his Pamela were written purposely to guard the morals of the young, and of the latter it was said, Pamela is like snow: she covers all things with her whiteness. Snow, when much trodden under a warm sun, is soon converted into slop—which coalesces ere long into mud and mire; in this respect the moral lessons of Pamela and Clarissa do indeed resemble snow; they seem fitter to stir up the mud of the soul—"the earthly mire" of its nature,—than permanently to cleanse and whiten it.—See Comparison of Richardson with Fielding, Remains, Vol. II. pp. 373-4.

Young's great poem is a notable instance of the want of reserve and poetical economy. In the poetry of Cowper, Burns, Crabbe, we have abundance of sadness, and it is all the more truly and deeply sad, because it seems to come unsought, nay,

only to combine the bloated style and peculiar rhythm of Hervey, which is poetic only on account of its utter unfitness for prose, and might as appropriately be called prosaic, from its utter unfitness for poetry; we have only, I repeat, to combine these Herveyisms with the strained thoughts, the figurative metaphysics and solemn epigrams of Young on the one hand; and with the loaded sensibility, the minute detail, the morbid consciousness of every thought and feeling in the whole flux and reflux of the mind, in short the self-involution and dreamlike continuity of Richardson on

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rather shunned. The poet's soul appears to crave the sunshine: he "does not love the shower nor seek the cold," but only yields to mournful reflections because they force themselves upon him in a world of woe. But when Young so resolutely makes love to Gloom and sets his cap at Melancholy, we suspect that both are in masquerade, and that blooming forms are beneath the sable stole; when he surrounds his head with cypress, we imagine a snug velvet cap under the dusky wreath; when he "sits by a lamp at mid-day, and has skulls, bones, and instruments of death for the ornaments of his study," we feel disposed to think that he makes sin, death, and sorrow a poetical amusement, and takes up these topics because they offer facilities for impressive writing more than to relieve their pressure on a burdened heart. I would not say the same of Hervey's piety, though it has such an air of what, in a colloquial not philosophical sense, may be called *determinism*. The author of *The Doctor* says that some styles are *flowery*, but that the Meditationist's is a *weedy* style: alluding, I suppose, to its luxuriant common-place, and vulgar shewiness, as of corn-poppies and wild mustard. But Hervey seems to have been a simple earnest clergyman, with his heart in his parish: whereas it is difficult not to look upon Young as a solemn worldling; though, as many a mountain-brow looks from a distance a sheer precipice, yet, when we approach, appears passable to the foot of man; so many a life viewed affar off seems hard and worldly, but shows its humanity and Christianity to those who see it closely. S. C.]

the other hand; and then to add the horrific incidents, and mysterious villains, (geniuses of supernatural intellect, if you will take the authors' words for it, but on a level with the meanest ruffians of the condemned cells, if we are to judge by their actions and contrivances)—to add the ruined castles, the dungeons, the trap-doors, the skeletons, the flesh-and-blood ghosts, and the perpetual moonshine of a modern author, (themselves the literary brood of the CASTLE OF OTRANTO,[5] the translations of which, with the imitations and improvements aforesaid, were about that time beginning to make as much noise in Germany as their originals were making in England),—and as the compound of these ingredients duly mixed, you will recognise the so called *German* drama. The *olla podrida* thus cooked up, was denounced, by the best critics in Germany, as the mere cramps of weakness, and orgasms of a sickly imagination on the part of the author, and the lowest provocation of torpid feeling on that of the readers. The old blunder, however, concerning the irregularity and wildness of Shakespeare, in which the German did but echo the French, who again were but the echoes of our own critics, was still in vogue, and Shakespeare was quoted as authority for the most anti-Shakespearean drama. We have indeed two poets who wrote as one, near the age of Shakespeare, to whom, (as the worst characteristic of their writings), the Coryphæus of the present drama may challenge the honour of being a poor relation, or impoverished descendant. For if we would charitably consent to forget the comic humour, the wit, the felicities of style, in other words, *all* the poetry, and nine-

[5] [This tale, by Horace Walpole, afterwards Earl of Orford, was published in 1765. S. C.]

tenths of all the genius of Beaumont and Fletcher, that which would remain becomes a Kotzebue.

The so-called *German* drama, therefore, is *English* in its *origin*, *English* in its *materials*, and *English* by re-adoption; and till we can prove that Kotzebue, or any of the whole breed of Kotzebues, whether dramatists or romantic writers, or writers of romantic dramas, were ever admitted to any other shelf in the libraries of well-educated Germans than were occupied by their originals, and apes' apes in their mother country, we should submit to carry our own brat on our own shoulders; or rather consider it as a lack-grace returned from transportation with such improvements only in growth and manners as young transported convicts usually come home with.

I know nothing that contributes more to a clear insight into the true nature of any literary phænomenon, than the comparison of it with some elder production, the likeness of which is striking, yet only apparent, while the difference is real. In the present case this opportunity is furnished us, by the old Spanish play, entitled *Atheista Fulminato*, formerly, and perhaps still, acted in the churches and monasteries of Spain, and which, under various names (*Don Juan*, *the Libertine*, *&c.*) has had its day of favour in every country throughout Europe. A popularity so extensive, and of a work so grotesque and extravagant, claims and merits philosophical attention and investigation. The first point to be noticed is, that the play is throughout imaginative. Nothing of it belongs to the real world, but the names of the places and persons. The comic parts, equally with the tragic; the living, equally with the defunct characters, are creatures of the brain; as little amenable to the rules of ordinary probability, as the Satan of PARADISE LOST, or the Caliban of

THE TEMPEST, and therefore to be understood and judged of as impersonated abstractions. Rank, fortune, wit, talent, acquired knowledge, and liberal accomplishments, with beauty of person, vigorous health, and constitutional hardihood,—all these advantages, elevated by the habits and sympathies of noble birth and national character, are supposed to have combined in Don Juan, so as to give him the means of carrying into all its practical consequences the doctrine of a godless nature, as the sole ground and efficient cause not only of all things, events, and appearances, but likewise of all our thoughts, sensations, impulses and actions. Obedience to nature is the only virtue: the gratification of the passions and appetites her only dictate: each individual's self-will the sole organ through which nature utters her commands, and

> "Self-contradiction is the only wrong!
> For, by the laws of spirit, in the right
> Is every individual character
> That acts in strict consistence with itself."[5]

That speculative opinions, however impious and daring they may be, are not always followed by correspondent conduct, is most true, as well as that they can scarcely in any instance be systematically realized, on account of their unsuitableness to human nature and to the institutions of society. It can be hell, only where it is all hell: and a separate world of devils is necessary for the existence of any one complete devil. But on the other hand it is no less clear, nor, with the biography of Carrier[6] and his fellow atheists before

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[5] [First Part of Wallenstein, translated from Schiller. Coleridge's Poet. Works, III. p. 160. S. C.]

[6] [This man figured in that last and worst state of the French Revolution, that state of seven-fold possession, when Jacobin-

us, can it be denied without wilful blindness, that the (so called) *system of nature*, (that is, materialism, with the utter rejection of moral responsibility, of a present Providence, and of both present and future retribution) may influence the characters and actions of individuals, and even of communities, to a degree that almost does away the distinction between men and devils, and will make the page of the future historian resemble the narration of a madman's dreams. It is not the wickedness of Don Juan, therefore, which constitutes the character an abstraction, and removes it from the rules of probability; but the rapid suc-

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ism, having borne down all its rival opponents, was riding in triumph through the land like Death in the Revelations. In this drama of dream-like horrors Carrier sustained his part so as to be "famous for ever." Mr. Carlyle, in that chapter of his French Revolution which is headed Destruction, gives an awful account of Representative Carrier's proceedings in La Vendée, and of his horrid *bon-mots*, worthy of a laughing hyæna possessed by the spirit of cruelty. "Sentence of Deportation," writes Carrier, "was executed *vertically*." That is, a gabarre with ninety priests under hatches, was sunk in the Loire, on signal given. "This was the first of the *Noyades*, which we may call *Drownages*, of Carrier."——"By degrees daylight itself witnesses Noyades: women and men are tied together, feet and feet, hands and hands: and flung in: this they call *Mariage Républicain*, Republican Marriage. — Dumb, out of suffering now, as pale swoln corpses, the victims tumble confusedly seaward along the Loire stream: the tide rolling them back: clouds of ravens darken the river: wolves prowl on the shoal-places: Carrier writes, '*Quel torrent revolutionnaire*. What a torrent of Revolution!' For the man is rabid and the time is rabid. These are the Noyades of Carrier twenty-five by the tale."— Mr. Carlyle calls this "the blackest aspect of the consummation of Sansculottism." The worst part of his account is too dreadful to quote. See also Revolutionary Plutarch, vol. iii. p. 105. S. C.]

cession of the correspondent acts and incidents, his intellectual superiority, and the splendid accumulation of his gifts and desirable qualities, as co-existent with entire wickedness in one and the same person. But this likewise is the very circumstance which gives to this strange play its charm and universal interest. Don Juan is, from beginning to end, an intelligible character: as much so as the Satan of Milton. The poet asks only of the reader, what, as a poet, he is privileged to ask: namely, that sort of negative faith in the existence of such a being, which we willingly give to productions professedly ideal, and a disposition to the same state of feeling, as that with which we contemplate the idealized figures of the Apollo Belvidere, and the Farnese Hercules. What the Hercules is to the eye in corporeal strength, Don Juan is to the mind in strength of character. The ideal consists in the happy balance of the generic with the individual. The former makes the character representative and symbolical, therefore instructive; because, *mutatis mutandis*, it is applicable to whole classes of men. The latter gives its living interest; for nothing lives or is real, but as definite and individual. To understand this completely, the reader need only recollect the specific state of his feelings, when in looking at a picture of the historic (more properly of the poetic or heroic) class, he objects to a particular figure as being too much of a portrait; and this interruption of his complacency he feels without the least reference to, or the least acquaintance with, any person in real life whom he might recognise in this figure. It is enough that such a figure is not ideal: and therefore not ideal, because one of the two factors or elements of the ideal is in excess. A similar and more powerful objection he would feel towards a set of figures which were *mere*

abstractions, like those of Cipriani, and what have been called Greek forms and faces, that is, outlines drawn according to a *recipe*. These again are not ideal; because in these the other element is in excess. "*Forma formans per formam formatam translucens*,"[7] is the definition and perfection of ideal art.

This excellence is so happily achieved in the Don Juan, that it is capable of interesting without poetry, nay, even without words, as in our pantomime of that name. We see clearly how the character is formed; and the very extravagance of the incidents, and the super-human entireness of Don Juan's agency, prevents the wickedness from shocking our minds to any painful degree. We do not believe it enough for this effect; no, not even with that kind of temporary and negative belief or acquiescence which I have described above. Meantime the qualities of his character are too desirable, too flattering to our pride and our wishes, not to make up on this side as much additional faith as was lost on the other. There is no danger (thinks the spectator or reader) of *my* becoming such a monster of iniquity as Don Juan! *I* never shall be an atheist! *I* shall never disallow all distinction between right and wrong! *I* have not the least inclination to be so outrageous a drawcansir in my love affairs! But to possess such a power of captivating and enchanting the affections of the other sex!—to be capable of inspiring in a charming and even a virtuous woman, a love so deep, and so entirely personal to *me!*—that even my worst vices, (if I *were* vicious), even my

[7] Better thus: *Forma specifica per formam individualem translucens:* or better yet—*Species individualizata, sive Individuum cuilibet Speciei determinatæ in omni parte correspondens et quasi versione quadam eam interpretans et repetens.*

cruelty and perfidy, (if I *were* cruel and perfidious), could not eradicate the passion!—to be so loved for my *own self*, that even with a distinct knowledge of my character, she yet died to save me!—this, sir, takes hold of two sides of our nature, the better and the worse. For the heroic disinterestedness, to which love can transport a woman, can not be contemplated without an honourable emotion of reverence towards womanhood: and, on the other hand, it is among the miseries, and abides in the dark ground-work of our nature, to crave an outward confirmation of that *something* within us, which is our *very self*, that something, not made up of our qualities and relations, but itself the supporter and substantial basis of all these. Love *me*, and not my qualities, may be a vicious and an insane wish, but it is not a wish wholly without a meaning.

Without power, virtue would be insufficient and incapable of revealing its being. It would resemble the magic transformation of Tasso's heroine into a tree, in which she could only groan and bleed.[8] Hence power is necessarily an object of our desire and of our admiration. But of all power, that of the mind is, on every account, the grand *desideratum* of human ambition. We shall be as Gods in knowledge, was and must have been the *first* temptation: and the co-existence of great intellectual lordship with guilt has never been adequately represented without exciting the strongest interest, and for this reason, that in this bad and heterogeneous co-ordination we can contemplate the intellect of man more exclusively as a separate self-subsistence, than in its proper state of subordination

[8] [*Gerusalemme Liberata.* Canto xiii. st. 38. et seq. S. C.]

to his own conscience, or to the will of an infinitely superiour being.

This is the sacred charm of Shakespeare's male characters in general. They are all cast in the mould of Shakespeare's own gigantic intellect; and this is the open attraction of his Richard, Iago, Edmund, and others in particular. But again; of all intellectual power, that of superiority to the fear of the invisible world is the most dazzling. Its influence is abundantly proved by the one circumstance, that it can bribe us into a voluntary submission of our better knowledge, into suspension of all our judgment derived from constant experience, and enable us to peruse with the liveliest interest the wildest tales of ghosts, wizards, genii, and secret talismans. On this propensity, so deeply rooted in our nature, a specific *dramatic* probability may be raised by a true poet, if the whole of his work be in harmony: a *dramatic* probability, sufficient for dramatic pleasure, even when the component characters and incidents border on impossibility. The poet does not require us to be awake and believe; he solicits us only to yield ourselves to a dream; and this too with our eyes open, and with our judgment *perdue* behind the curtain, ready to awaken us at the first motion of our will: and meantime, only, not to *dis*believe. And in such a state of mind, who but must be impressed with the cool intrepidity of *Don John* on the appearance of his father's ghost:

"Ghost.—Monster! behold these wounds!

"D. John.—I do! They were well meant and well performed, I see.

"Ghost. ————Repent, repent of all thy villanies.
My clamorous blood to heaven for vengeance cries,
Heaven will pour out his judgments on you all.
Hell gapes for you, for you each fiend doth call,

And hourly waits your unrepenting fall.
You with eternal horrors they'll torment,
Except of all your crimes you suddenly repent.

(*Ghost sinks.*)

"D. JOHN.—Farewell, thou art a foolish ghost. Repent, quoth he! what could this mean? Our senses are all in a mist sure.

"D. ANTONIO.—(*one of D. Juan's reprobate companions.*) They are not! 'Twas a ghost.

"D. LOPEZ.—(*another reprobate.*) I ne'er believed those foolish tales before.

"D. JOHN.—Come! 'Tis no matter. Let it be what it will, it must be natural.

"D. ANT.—And nature is unalterable in us too.

"D. JOHN.—'Tis true! The nature of a ghost can not change our's."

Who also can deny a portion of sublimity to the tremendous consistency with which he stands out the last fearful trial, like a second Prometheus?

"Chorus of Devils.

"STATUE-GHOST.—Will you not relent and feel remorse?

"D. JOHN.—Could'st thou bestow another heart on me I might. But with this heart I have, I can not.

"D. LOPEZ.—These things are prodigious.

"D. ANTON.—I have a sort of grudging to relent, but something holds me back.

"D. LOP.—If we could, 'tis now too late. I will not.

"D. ANT.—We defy thee!

"GHOST.—Perish ye impious wretches, go and find the punishments laid up in store for you!

(*Thunder and lightning. D. Lop. and D. Ant. are swallowed up.*)

"GHOST to D. JOHN.—Behold their dreadful fates, and know that thy last moment's come!

"D. JOHN.—Think not to fright me, foolish ghost; I'll break your marble body in pieces and pull down your horse.

(*Thunder and lightning—chorus of devils, &c.*)

"D. JOHN.—These things I see with wonder, but no fear.
Were all the elements to be confounded,
And shuffled all into their former chaos;

Were seas of sulphur flaming round about me,
And all mankind roaring within those fires,
I could not fear, or feel the least remorse.
To the last instant I would dare thy power.
Here I stand firm, and all thy threats contemn.
Thy murderer (*to the ghost of one whom he had murdered*)
Stands here! Now do thy worst!"
(*He is swallowed up in a cloud of fire.*)

In fine the character of Don John consists in the union of every thing desirable to human nature, as *means*, and which therefore by the well known law of association become at length desirable on their own account. On their own account, and, in their own dignity, they are here displayed, as being employed to *ends* so *un*human, that in the effect, they appear almost as *means* without an *end*. The ingredients too are mixed in the happiest proportion, so as to uphold and relieve each other—more especially in that constant interpoise of wit, gaiety, and social generosity, which prevents the criminal, even in his most atrocious moments, from sinking into the mere ruffian, as far at least, as our imagination sits in judgment. Above all, the fine suffusion through the whole, with the characteristic manners and feelings, of a highly bred gentleman gives life to the drama. Thus having invited the statue-ghost of the governour, whom he had murdered, to supper, which invitation the marble ghost accepted by a nod of the head, Don John has prepared a banquet.

"D. JOHN.—Some wine, sirrah! Here's to Don Pedro's ghost—he should have been welcome.

"D. LOP.—The rascal is afraid of you after death.
(*One knocks hard at the door.*)

"D. JOHN.—(*to the servant*)—Rise and do your duty.

"SERV.—Oh the devil, the devil! (*Marble ghost enters.*)

"D. JOHN.—Ha! 'tis the ghost! Let's rise and receive him!

Come, Governour, you are welcome, sit there; if we had thought you would have come, we would have staid for you.

* * * * * *

Here, Governour, your health! Friends, put it about! Here's excellent meat, taste of this ragout. Come, I'll help you, come eat, and let old quarrels be forgotten.

(*The ghost threatens him with vengeance.*)

"D. JOHN.—We are too much confirmed—curse on this dry discourse. Come, here's to your mistress, you had one when you were living: not forgetting your sweet sister.

(*devils enter.*)

"D. JOHN.—Are these some of your retinue? Devils, say you? I'm sorry I have no burnt brandy to treat 'em with, that's drink fit for devils." &c.

Nor is the scene from which we quote interesting, in dramatic probability alone; it is susceptible likewise of a sound moral; of a moral that has more than common claims on the notice of a too numerous class, who are ready to receive the qualities of gentlemanly courage, and scrupulous honour, (in all the recognised laws of honour,) as the substitutes of virtue, instead of its ornaments. This, indeed, is the moral value of the play at large, and that which places it at a world's distance from the spirit of modern jacobinism. The latter introduces to us clumsy copies of these showy instrumental qualities, in order to *reconcile* us to vice and want of principle; while the *Atheista Fulminato* presents an exquisite portraiture of the same qualities, in all their gloss and glow, but presents them for the sole purpose of displaying their hollowness, and in order to put us on our guard by demonstrating their utter indifference to vice and virtue, whenever these and the like accomplishments are contemplated for themselves alone.

Eighteen years ago I observed, that the whole secret of the modern jacobinical drama, (which, and not the German, is its appropriate designation,) and of

all its popularity, consists in the confusion and subversion of the natural order of things in their causes and effects: namely, in the excitement of surprise by representing the qualities of liberality, refined feeling, and a nice sense of honour (those things rather which pass amongst us for such) in persons and in classes where experience teaches us least to expect them; and by rewarding with all the sympathies which are the due of virtue, those criminals whom law, reason, and religion have excommunicated from our esteem.

This of itself would lead me back to BERTRAM, or the CASTLE OF ST. ALDOBRAND;[7] but, in my own

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[7] ["Before the tragedy of Bertram was produced at Drury Lane," says a writer in the Gentleman's Magazine of Jan. 1825, "and received with such distinguished approbation, Mr. Maturin was the humble, unknown, and unnoticed Curate of St. Peter's, Dublin." The play was performed through the influence of Lord Byron, who is said to have sent the author £500 in consequence of an unfavourable review of one of his works, —(probably this very critique of Mr. Coleridge's,)—with a note, "that he was better qualified to review his reviewers than they him." He gained perhaps more than a thousand pounds by this performance, (besides the five hundred which the censure of it procured him.) A few months after the success of Bertram he produced a second tragedy, which failed. He had published one or two novels before he became famous: in his later years he composed works of romance, which evinced "great powers of imagination and fecundity of language, with lamentable carelessness in the application of both;" and, writing "for money not for fame," drew a "considerable revenue from the sale of his productions." In 1821 he brought out a poem in blank verse called *The Universe*.

The writer, from whose account these notices are taken, speaks most highly of Mr. Maturin's merits and popularity as a preacher. "His six controversial sermons," says he, "preached during last Lent, shew the author to have been a profound scholar and an acute reasoner; never since Dean Kir-

mind, this tragedy was brought into connection with THE LIBERTINE, (Shadwell's adaptation of the *Atheista Fulminato* to the English stage in the reign of Charles the Second,) by the fact, that our modern drama is taken, in the substance of it, from the first scene of the third act of the THE LIBERTINE. But with what palpable superiority of judgment in the original! Earth and hell, men and spirits are up in arms against Don John; the two former acts of the play have not only prepared us for the supernatural, but accustomed us to the prodigious. It is, therefore, neither more nor less than we anticipate when the Captain exclaims: "In all the dangers I have been, such horrours I never knew. I am quite unmanned:" and when the Hermit says, that he had "beheld the ocean in wildest rage, yet ne'er before saw a storm so dreadful, such horrid flashes of lightning, and such claps of thunder, were never in my remembrance." And Don John's burst of startling impiety is equally intelligible in its motive, as dramatic in its effect.

But what is there to account for the prodigy of the tempest at Bertram's shipwreck? It is a mere supernatural effect, without even a hint of any supernatural agency; a prodigy, without any circumstance mentioned that is prodigious; and a miracle introduced without a ground, and ending without a

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wan's time were such crowds attracted to the Parish Church as during the delivery of these sermons; neither rain nor storm could subdue the anxiety of all classes and all persuasions to hear them; and did he leave no other monuments whereon to rest his fame, these sermons alone would be sufficient." The Rev. R. Charles Maturin died Oct. 30, 1824. It was said that Sir Walter Scott offered his editorial services to Mr. Maturin's widow, with respect to some of his unpublished manuscripts. S. C.]

result. Every event and every scene of the play might have taken place as well if Bertram and his vessel had been driven in by a common hard gale, or from want of provisions. The first act would have indeed lost its greatest and most sonorous picture; a scene for the sake of a scene, without a word spoken; as such, therefore, (a rarity without a precedent), we must take it, and be thankful! In the opinion of not a few, it was, in every sense of the word, the best scene in the play. I am quite certain it was the most innocent: and the steady, quiet uprightness of the flame of the wax-candles, which the monks held over the roaring billows amid the storm of wind and rain, was really miraculous.

The Sicilian sea coast: a convent of monks: night: a most portentous, unearthly storm: a vessel is wrecked: contrary to all human expectation, one man saves himself by his prodigious powers as a swimmer, aided by the peculiarity of his destination—

"PRIOR.——— All, all did perish—
FIRST MONK.—Change, change those drenched weeds—
PRIOR.—I wist not of them—every soul did perish—

*Enter third Monk hastily.*

"THIRD MONK.—No, there was one did battle with the storm
With careless desperate force; full many times
His life was won and lost, as tho' he recked not—
No hand did aid him, and he aided none—
Alone he breasted the broad wave, alone
That man was saved."

Well! This man is led in by the monks, supposed dripping wet, and to very natural inquiries he either remains silent, or gives most brief and surly answers, and after three or four of these half-line courtesies, "dashing off the monks" who had saved him, he ex-

claims in the true sublimity of our modern misanthropic heroism—

"Off! ye are men—there's poison in your touch.
But I must yield, for this" *(what?)* "hath left me strengthless."

So end the three first scenes. In the next (the Castle of St. Aldobrand,) we find the servants there equally frightened with this unearthly storm, though wherein it differed from other violent storms we are not told, except that Hugo informs us, page 9—

"PIET.—Hugo, well met. Does e'en thy age bear
Memory of so terrible a storm?
HUGO.—They have been frequent lately.
PIET.—They are ever so in Sicily.
HUGO.—So it is said. But storms when I was young
Would still pass o'er like Nature's fitful fevers,
And rendered all more wholesome. Now their rage,
Sent thus unseasonable and profitless,
Speaks like the threats of heaven."

A most perplexing theory of Sicilian storms is this of old Hugo! and what is very remarkable, not apparently founded on any great familiarity of his own with this troublesome article. For when Pietro asserts the "ever more frequency" of tempests in Sicily, the old man professes to know nothing more of the fact, but by hearsay. "So it is said."—But why he assumed this storm to be unseasonable, and on what he grounded his prophecy, (for the storm is still in full fury), that it would be profitless, and without the physical powers common to all other violent sea-winds in purifying the atmosphere, we are left in the dark; as well concerning the particular points in which he knew it, during its continuance, to differ from those that he had been acquainted with in his youth. We are at length introduced to the Lady Imogine, who,

we learn, had not rested "*through*" the night; not on account of the tempest, for

> "Long ere the storm arose, her restless gestures
> Forbade all hope to see her blest with sleep."

Sitting at a table, and looking at a portrait, she informs us—First, that portrait-painters may make a portrait from memory—

> "The limner's art may trace the absent feature."

For surely these words could never mean, that a painter may have a person sit to him who afterwards may leave the room or perhaps the country? Secondly, that a portrait-painter can enable a mourning lady to possess a good likeness of her absent lover, but that the portrait-painter cannot, and who shall—

> "Restore the *scenes* in which they met and parted?"

The natural answer would have been — Why the scene-painter to be sure! But this unreasonable lady requires in addition sundry things to be painted that have neither lines nor colours—

> "The thoughts, the recollections, sweet and bitter,
> Or the Elysian dreams of lovers when they loved."

Which last sentence must be supposed to mean; *when they were present, and* making love to each other.—Then, if this portrait could speak, it would "acquit the faith of womankind." How? Had she remained constant? No, she has been married to another man, whose wife she now is. How then? Why, that, in spite of her marriage vow, she had continued to yearn and crave for her former lover—

> "This has her body, that her mind:
> Which has the better bargain?"[8]

[8] [Altered from the last lines of a Song in Congreve's *Poems on Several Occasions*. Works, Vol. II. p. 168. S. C.]

The lover, however, was not contented with this precious arrangement, as we shall soon find. The lady proceeds to inform us, that during the many years of their separation, there have happened in the different parts of the world, a number of "*such things;*" even such, as in a course of years always have, and till the Millennium, doubtless always will happen somewhere or other. Yet this passage, both in language and in metre, is perhaps amongt the best parts of the play. The lady's loved companion and most esteemed attendant, Clotilda, now enters and explains this love and esteem by proving herself a most passive and dispassionate listener, as well as a brief and lucky querist, who asks by chance, questions that we should have thought made for the very sake of the answers. In short, she very much reminds us of those puppet-heroines, for whom the showman contrives to dialogue without any skill in ventriloquism. This, notwithstanding, is the best scene in the Play, and though crowded with solecisms, corrupt diction, and offences against metre, would possess merits sufficient to outweigh them, if we could suspend the moral sense during the perusal. It tells well and passionately the preliminary circumstances, and thus overcomes the main difficulty of most first acts, to wit, that of retrospective narration. It tells us of her having been honourably addressed by a noble youth, of rank and fortune vastly superiour to her own: of their mutual love, heightened on her part by gratitude; of his loss of his sovereign's favour; his disgrace; attainder; and flight; that he (thus degraded) sank into a vile ruffian, the chieftain of a murderous banditti; and that from the habitual indulgence of the most reprobate habits and ferocious passions, he had become so changed, even in appearance and features,

> "That she who bore him had recoiled from him,
> Nor known the alien visage of her child,
> Yet still *she* (Imogine) lov'd him."

She is compelled by the silent entreaties of a father, perishing with "bitter shameful want on the cold earth," to give her hand, with a heart thus irrecoverably pre-engaged, to Lord Aldobrand, the enemy of her lover, even to the very man who had baffled his ambitious schemes, and was, at the present time, entrusted with the execution of the sentence of death which had been passed on Bertram. Now, the proof of "woman's love," so industriously held forth for the sympathy, if not the esteem of the audience, consists in this, that, though Bertram had become a robber and a murderer by trade, a ruffian in manners, yea, with form and features at which his *own mother* could not but "recoil," yet she (Lady Imogine) "the wife of a most noble, honoured Lord," estimable as a man, exemplary and affectionate as a husband, and the fond father of her only child—that she, notwithstanding all this, striking her heart, dares to say to it—

> "But thou art Bertram's still, and Bertram's ever."

A Monk now enters, and entreats in his Prior's name for the wonted hospitality, and "free *noble usage*" of the Castle of St. Aldobrand for some wretched shipwrecked souls, and from this we learn, for the first time, to our infinite surprise, that notwithstanding the supernaturalness of the storm aforesaid, not only Bertram, but the whole of his gang, had been saved, by what means we are left to conjecture, and can only conclude that they had all the same desperate swimming powers, and the same saving destiny as the hero, Bertram himself. So ends the first act, and with it the tale of the events, both those with which the tra-

gedy begins, and those which had occurred previous to the date of its commencement. The second displays Bertram in disturbed sleep, which the Prior, who hangs over him, prefers calling a "starting trance," and with a strained voice, that would have awakened one of the seven sleepers, observes to the audience—

> "How the lip works! How the bare teeth *do* grind!
> And beaded drops course[9] down his writhen brow!"

The dramatic effect of which passage we not only concede to the admirers of this tragedy, but acknowledge the further advantage of preparing the audience for the most surprising series of wry faces, proflated mouths, and lunatic gestures that were ever "*launched*" on an audience to "*sear the sense.*"[10]

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[9] ——————"The big round tears
Cours'd one another down his innocent nose
In piteous chase,"*

Says Shakespeare of a wounded stag hanging its head over a stream: naturally, from the position of the head, and most beautifully, from the association of the preceding image, of the chase, in which "the poor sequester'd stag from the hunter's aim had ta'en a hurt." In the supposed position of Bertram, the metaphor, if not false, loses all the propriety of the original.

[10] Among a number of other instances of words chosen without reason, Imogine in the first act declares, that thunder-storms were not able to intercept her prayers for "the desperate man, in desperate *ways* who *dealt*"——

> "Yea, when the launched bolt did sear her sense,
> Her soul's deep orisons were breathed for him;"

that is, when a red-hot bolt, launched at her from a thunder-cloud, had cauterized her sense, in plain English, burnt her eyes out of her head, she kept still praying on.

"Was not *this* love? Yea, thus doth woman love!"

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* [*As you like it.* Act II. sc. 1. S. C.]

"Prior.—I will awake him from this *horrid trance.*
This is no natural sleep! Ho, *wake thee*, stranger!"

This is rather a whimsical application of the verb reflex we must confess, though we remember a similar transfer of the agent to the patient in a manuscript tragedy, in which the Bertram of the piece, prostrating a man with a single blow of his fist, exclaims—"Knock me thee down, then ask thee if thou liv'st." Well; the stranger obeys, and whatever his sleep might have been, his waking was perfectly natural; for lethargy itself could not withstand the scolding Stentorship of Mr. Holland, the Prior. We next learn from the best authority, his own confession, that the misanthropic hero, whose destiny was incompatible with drowning, is Count Bertram, who not only reveals his past fortunes, but avows with open atrocity, his Satanic hatred of Imogine's lord, and his frantick thirst of revenge; and so the raving character raves, and the scolding character scolds—and what else? Does not the Prior *act?* Does he not send for a posse of constables or thief-takers to handcuff the villain, or take him either to Bedlam or Newgate? Nothing of the kind; the author preserves the unity of character, and the scolding Prior from first to last does nothing but scold, with the exception indeed of the last scene of the last act, in which, with a most surprising revolution, he whines, weeps, and kneels to the condemned blaspheming assassin out of pure affection to the high-hearted man, the sublimity of whose angel-sin rivals the star-bright apostate, (that is, who was as proud as Lucifer, and as wicked as the Devil), and, "had thrilled him," (Prior Holland aforesaid), with wild admiration.

Accordingly in the very next scene, we have this tragic Macheath, with his whole gang, in the Castle

of St. Aldobrand, without any attempt on the Prior's part either to prevent him, or to put the mistress and servants of the Castle on their guard against their new inmates; though he (the Prior) knew, and confesses that he knew, that Bertram's "fearful mates" were assassins so habituated and naturalized to guilt, that—

> "When their *drenched hold* forsook both gold and gear,
> They griped their daggers with a murderer's instinct;"

and though he also knew, that Bertram was the leader of a band whose trade was blood. To the Castle however he goes, thus with the holy Prior's consent, if not with his assistance; and thither let us follow him.

No sooner is our hero safely housed in the Castle of St. Aldobrand, than he attracts the notice of the lady and her confidante, by his "wild and terrible dark eyes," "muffled form," "fearful form,"[11] "darkly wild," "proudly stern," and the like common-place indefinites, seasoned by merely verbal *antitheses*, and at best, copied with very slight change, from the Con-

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[11] This sort of repetition is one of this writer's peculiarities, and there is scarce a page which does not furnish one or more instances—*Ex. gr.* in the first page or two. Act I, line 7th, "and *deemed* that I might sleep."—Line 10, "Did rock and *quiver* in the bickering *glare*."—Lines 14, 15, 16, "But by the momently *gleams* of sheeted blue, Did the pale marbles *glare* so *sternly* on me, I almost *deemed* they lived."—Line 37, "The *glare* of Hell."—Line 35, "O holy Prior, this is no *earthly storm*."—Line 38, "This is no *earthly storm*."—Line 42, "*Dealing* with us."—Line 43, "*Deal* thus sternly."—Line 44, "Speak! thou hast *something seen?*"—"A *fearful sight!*"—Line 45, "What hast thou *seen?* A piteous, *fearful sight*."—Line 48, "*quivering gleams*."—Line 50, "In the hollow *pauses of the storm*."—Line 61, "The *pauses of the storm*, &c."

rade of Southey's JOAN OF ARC. The lady Imogine, who has been, (as is the case, she tells us, with all soft and solemn spirits,) *worshipping* the moon on a terrace or rampart within view of the Castle, insists on having an interview with our hero, and this too *tête-à-tête*. Would the reader learn why and wherefore the confidante is excluded, who very properly remonstrates against such "conference, alone, at night, with one who bears such fearful form;" the reason follows —"why, *therefore* send him!" I say, *follows*, because the next line, "all things of fear have lost their power over me," is separated from the former by a break or pause, and besides that it is a very poor answer to the danger, is no answer at all to the gross indelicacy of this wilful exposure. We must therefore regard it as a mere after-thought, that a little softens the rudeness, but adds nothing to the weight, of that exquisite woman's reason aforesaid. And so *exit* Clotilda and enter Bertram, who "stands without looking at her," that is, with his lower limbs forked, his arms akimbo, his side to the lady's front, the whole figure resembling an inverted Y. He is soon however roused from the state surly to the state frantick, and then follow raving, yelling, cursing, she fainting, he relenting, in runs Imogine's child, squeaks "mother!" He snatches it up, and with a "God bless thee, child! Bertram has kissed thy child,"—the curtain drops. The third act is short, and short be our account of it. It introduces Lord St. Aldobrand on his road homeward, and next Imogine in the convent, confessing the foulness of her heart to the Prior, who first indulges his old humour with a fit of senseless scolding, then leaves her alone with her ruffian paramour, with whom she makes at once an infamous appointment, and the

curtain drops, that it may be carried into act and consummation.

I want words to describe the mingled horror and disgust with which I witnessed the opening of the fourth act, considering it as a melancholy proof of the depravation of the public mind. The shocking spirit of jacobinism seemed no longer confined to politics. The familiarity with atrocious events and characters appeared to have poisoned the taste, even where it had not directly disorganized the moral principles, and left the feelings callous to all the mild appeals, and craving alone for the grossest and most outrageous stimulants. The very fact then present to our senses, that a British audience could remain passive under such an insult to common decency, nay, receive with a thunder of applause, a human being supposed to have come reeking from the consummation of this complex foulness and baseness, these and the like reflections so pressed as with the weight of lead upon my heart, that actor, author, and tragedy would have been forgotten, had it not been for a plain elderly man sitting beside me, who, with a very serious face, that at once expressed surprise and aversion, touched my elbow, and, pointing to the actor, said to me in a half-whisper—"Do you see that little fellow there? he has just been committing adultery!" Somewhat relieved by the laugh which this droll address occasioned, I forced back my attention to the stage sufficiently to learn, that Bertram is recovered from a transient fit of remorse by the information, that St. Aldobrand was commissioned (to do, what every honest man must have done without commission, if he did his duty) to seize him and deliver him to the just vengeance of the law; an information which, (as he had long known himself to be an attainted traitor and proclaimed out-

law, and not only a trader in blood himself, but notoriously the Captain of a gang of thieves, pirates and assassins), assuredly could not have been new to him. It is this, however, which alone and instantly restores him to his accustomed state of raving, blasphemy, and nonsense. Next follows Imogine's constrained interview with her injured husband, and his sudden departure again, all in love and kindness, in order to attend the feast of St. Anselm at the convent. This was, it must be owned, a very strange engagement for so tender a husband to make within a few minutes after so long an absence. But first his lady has told him that she has "a vow on her," and wishes "that black perdition may gulf her perjured soul,"—(Note: she is lying at the very time)—if she ascends his bed, till her penance is accomplished. How, therefore, is the poor husband to amuse himself in this interval of her penance? But do not be distressed, reader, on account of the St. Aldobrand's absence! As the author has contrived to send him out of the house, when a husband would be in his, and the lover's way, so he will doubtless not be at a loss to bring him back again as soon as he is wanted. Well! the husband gone in on the one side, out pops the lover from the other, and for the fiendish purpose of harrowing up the soul of his wretched accomplice in guilt, by announcing to her, with most brutal and blasphemous execrations, his fixed and deliberate resolve to assassinate her husband; all this too is for no discoverable purpose on the part of the author, but that of introducing a series of super-tragic starts, pauses, screams, struggling, dagger-throwing, falling on the ground, starting up again wildly, swearing, outcries for help, falling again on the ground, rising again, faintly tottering towards the door, and, to end the scene, a most convenient fainting

fit of our lady's, just in time to give Bertram an opportunity of seeking the object of his hatred, before she alarms the house, which indeed she has had full time to have done before, but that the author rather chose she should amuse herself and the audience by the above-described ravings and startings. She recovers slowly, and to her enter Clotilda, the confidante and mother confessor; then commences, what in theatrical language is called the madness, but which the author more accurately entitles, delirium, it appearing indeed a sort of intermittent fever with fits of lightheadedness off and on, whenever occasion and stage effect happen to call for it. A convenient return of the storm, (we told the reader before-hand how it would be), had changed—

> " The rivulet, that bathed the convent walls,
> Into a foaming flood: upon its brink
> The Lord and his small train *do* stand appalled.
> With torch and bell from their high battlements
> The monks *do* summon to the pass in vain;
> He must return to-night."—

Talk of the Devil, and his horns appear, says the proverb: and sure enough, within ten lines of the exit of the messenger, sent to stop him, the arrival of Lord St. Aldobrand is announced. Bertram's ruffian band now enter, and range themselves across the stage, giving fresh cause for Imogine's screams and madness. St. Aldobrand, having received his mortal wound behind the scenes, totters in to welter in his blood, and to die at the feet of this double-damned adultress.

Of her, as far as she is concerned in this fourth act, we have two additional points to notice: first, the low cunning and Jesuitical trick with which she deludes her husband into *words* of forgiveness, which

he himself does not understand; and secondly, that everywhere she is made the object of interest and sympathy, and it is not the author's fault, if, at any moment, she excites feelings less gentle, than those we are accustomed to associate with the self-accusations of a sincere religious penitent. And did a British audience endure all this?—They received it with plaudits, which, but for the rivalry of the carts and hackney coaches, might have disturbed the evening-prayers of the scanty week day congregation at St. Paul's cathedral.

Tempora mutantur, nos et mutamur in illis.

Of the fifth act, the only thing noticeable, (for rant and nonsense, though abundant as ever, have long before the last act become things of course,) is the profane representation of the high altar in a chapel, with all the vessels and other preparations for the holy sacrament. A hymn is actually sung on the stage by the chorister boys! For the rest, Imogine, who now and then *talks* deliriously, but who is always light-headed as far as her *gown* and *hair* can make her so, wanders about in dark woods with cavern-rocks and precipices in the back-scene; and a number of mute *dramatis personæ* move in and out continually, for whose presence, there is always at least this reason, that they afford something to be *seen*, by that very large part of a Drury Lane audience who have small chance of *hearing* a word. She had, it appears, taken her child with her, but what becomes of the child, whether she murdered it or not, nobody can tell, nobody can learn; it was a riddle at the representation, and after a most attentive perusal of the Play, a riddle it remains.

" No more I know, I wish I did,
And I would tell it all to you;
For what became of this poor child
There's none that ever knew."[12]

Our whole information[12] is derived from the following words—

" PRIOR.—Where is thy child?
CLOTIL.—(*Pointing to the cavern into which she has looked*)
Oh he lies cold within his cavern-tomb!
Why dost thou urge her with the horrid theme?
PRIOR.—(*who will not, the reader may observe, be disappointed of his dose of scolding*)
It was to make (*query* wake) one living cord o' th' heart,
And I will try, tho' my own breaks at it.
Where is thy child?
IMOG.—(*with a frantic laugh*)
The forest fiend hath snatched him—
He (*who? the fiend or the child?*) rides the night-mare thro' the wizard woods."

Now these two lines consist in a senseless plagiarism from the counterfeited madness of Edgar in Lear, who, in imitation of the gypsy incantations, puns on the old word *mair*, a hag; and the no less senseless adoption of Dryden's forest fiend,[14] and the wisard stream by which Milton, in his Lycidas, so finely characterizes the spreading Deva, *fabulosus amnis*.[15] Observe too these images stand unique in the speeches of Imogine, without the slightest resemblance to any

[12] [Wordsworth's Thorn, P. W. II. p. 131. S. C.]

[13] The child is an important personage, for I see not by what possible means the author could have ended the second and third acts but for its timely appearance. How ungrateful then not further to notice its fate!

[14] [*Theodore and Honoria.* S. C.]

[15] [" Nor yet where Deva spreads her wisard stream." I. 55. S. C.]

thing she says before or after. But we are weary. The characters in this act frisk about, here, there, and every where, as teasingly as the Jack o'Lantern-lights which mischievous boys, from across a narrow street, throw with a looking-glass on the faces of their opposite neighbours. Bertram disarmed, out-heroding Charles de Moor in the Robbers, befaces the collected knights of St. Anselm, (all in complete armour,) and so, by pure dint of black looks, he outdares them into passive poltroons. The sudden revolution in the Prior's manners we have before noticed, and it is indeed so *outré*, that a number of the audience imagined a great secret was to come out, viz.: that the Prior was one of the many instances of a youthful sinner metamorphosed into an old scold, and that this Bertram would appear at last to be his son. Imogine re-appears at the convent, and dies of her own accord. Bertram stabs himself, and dies by her side, and that the play may conclude as it began, to wit, in a superfetation of blasphemy upon nonsense, because he had snatched a sword from a despicable coward, who retreats in terror when it is pointed towards him in sport; this *felo de se*, and thief-captain—this loathsome and leprous confluence of robbery, adultery, murder, and cowardly assassination,—this monster, whose best deed is, the having saved his betters from the degradation of hanging him, by turning Jack Ketch to himself; first recommends the charitable Monks and holy Prior to pray for his soul, and then has the folly and impudence to exclaim—

"I die no felon's death,
A warriour's weapon freed a warriour's soul!"—

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[Great displeasure was excited among the patrons of Mr. Maturin by this review of his tragedy, and to those who deemed such a production worthy of patronage it must naturally have

appeared an unwarrantable piece of violence. I have even heard a friend of Mr. Coleridge object to it, not as unjust, but as having been called forth by an occasion unworthy to occupy his thoughts. For my own part, I feel some dislike to the literary censures which accompany the moral exposure, because I think they tend to weaken its effect:—though a corrupt *taste* is often so intricated with a corrupt morality that it is difficult to exhibit either separately;—the moral exposure itself I do *not* consider unworthy of one, who never wanted generosity to point out what was noble and admirable, at the risk of throwing his own performances into shade, and who never lacked courage openly to denounce what he knew to be wrong and injurious,—especially in his own province of literature,—by which the public might be affected.

It appears in the Life of Sir Walter Scott, that a fierce attack upon Mr. Coleridge, in consequence of these strictures, had been prepared by the author of Bertram, and that this was suppressed by the advice of the author of Waverley, who admonished his correspondent, that the world might not sympathize with his indignation to the extent in which he had poured it forth; and also that it might injure the effect of his forthcoming romance, into some part of which the tirade had been introduced—that such an outburst of rage in such a place would be like a stream of lava rushing from the side of a peaceful green hill. Some of the hills which were raised in those days by writers of the Satanic school would have been little the worse for a volcanic eruption,—so flamy and sulphureous were they in their own nature. This, from Sir Walter's description, must have been of a milder sort. As far as Mr. Coleridge was concerned, *he* could not have been materially the worse had one more fiery libel, designed for the blasting of his credit, been sent off to whiz and blaze and burn blue for a moment. Could Mr. Maturin have justified his play! Could he have washed it white in its moral complexion? Anything to that effect ought not to have been suppressed. Whether the Public would have sympathized with his natural anger I know not, but of this I am sure, that he could not have blackened my father's reputation as a writer with the unprejudiced part of it, or on any point in which the Public had any concern.

But in default of other weapons of adequate force Mr. Maturin may have snatched up in his haste the dagger of per-

sonality; indeed it may be conjectured that he did so, because, Sir Walter Scott, in a spirit of conciliation, alludes to Mr. Coleridge's *bad habits*. At that very time my father was taking measures and making efforts to break the chain of those habits: he had never abandoned himself wholly to their effects, but had still striven, in one way or other, to labour usefully to the public and profitably for his family, to whose use he had devoted the annuity spoken of in these pages. Could the noble-hearted man, who thus aided him, have looked into the future and there beheld all that his friend was to do in his vocation, and all that his doing would be really worth, he would, I am confident, have been well satisfied with this disposal of a part of his worldly wealth, though the performance might not have been exactly in the form that he anticipated. Did any private fault disqualify my father for pronouncing censures on what he considered to be public wrongs committed, whether blindly or no, yet deliberately? Thoughtful persons will rather say that his strong sense of evil and fearless denunciation of it, from whatever quarter it came, whether from Statesman or Judge or Reviewer, Imperial Despot or popular Dramatist, together with his free confession of what he called his "sin," and earnest endeavour to save others from falling into the same snare by the *darkest* representation of its nature and consequences, go a great way toward expiating that error of his course, so far as aught of expiation can be imputed to the human will itself, apart from the Redemptive power by which it is filled and actuated, in all that it does and *is*, in conformity to the Divine Will and Reason. The unworthy thoughts which Lord Byron entertained on this subject, unworthy of his own better mind, found no entrance, I trust, into that of Sir Walter Scott, whether he was or was not aware of the warm admiration which my Father felt and expressed for *his* genius, attended, as the fruits of it had been, by a popularity and a success unspeakably more *enviable* than any that was enjoyed by the author of Bertram.

The critique lays to the charge of the play a spirit of immorality, not in the way of direct inculcation, but in the only way in which a modern British audience would have endured it, the only way in which it could have been insidiously pernicious. Now this is a charge that could have no effect except just so far as it was substantiated by the play itself and the moral sense of its auditors. When a man is accused publicly of private

faults he may find it painful and difficult to clear away the cloud from his character; he must unveil his private life in order to justify it, and such a necessity is in itself a grievance. If his poetry is ridiculed it may be made the laughing-stock of the public for a season, though destined to be held in esteem ever after; if his religious writings are accused of false doctrine on subtle points,—and all theology is subtle,—he may have to bear the stigma of heresy during his whole life-time: Pantheism, Pelagianism, Socinianism, denial of Objective Religion or of the Inspiration of Scripture—all these fundamental errors may be plausibly though falsely imputed, and the accusations will, in certain cases, be more readily and generally admitted than the defence, because grounded on ordinary and popular modes of thought and expression, while the accused views presuppose a corrected and re-adjusted philosophy. But the charge against *Bertram* had nothing subtle in the nature of it, and the sentiments which it involves have since been adopted and brought to bear on the French stage in the Quarterly Review. [16] Englishmen have denounced the French dramatists for polluting the public mind by a stimulant display of atrocities and vilenesses "in all their odious details," though they admit such things to be abominable, and show that the end of them is destruction; shall they shelter and encourage any *approach* to such Jacobinism in literature at home? "We do not forget," says the article on the French Drama to which I refer, "that crime and the worst cause (sort?) of crime, has been in all ages the domain of tragedy. We do not forget the families of Atreus and Laius, and the whole tribe of mythological and historical tragedies, in all languages—but most of these inculcate moral lessons,—none of them offend decency—none of them *infame* criminal passions." The distinction between the ancient dramas and the vicious modern class, which my father stigmatized, is clear and broad. In the former guilty passion is not the immediate subject of the piece, or that in which the auditors are to be interested, but the consequences and punishment of criminal acts. They do not deal with low emotions at all, much less present them to advantage. They represent sin, not as it appears to the sinner in its rise and progress, its true lineaments and colours lost amid the glow of excited feeling; but as it appears after

[16] [Quarterly Review of March, 1834, p. 211.]

its consummation, livid, ghastly, and appalling. Sin seemed beautiful to Lucifer, when she was bringing about his fall; hideous and detestable *after* his fall, when he finds her at Hell-gate and fails to recognise her features. The ancient drama presents her in the latter aspect,—not as she showed herself in the courts above. In the Orestean trilogy we are led to regard with awful interest the workings of Divine retribution; we sympathize with Clytemnestra not as the paramour of Ægisthus, who seems only the tool of her stern designs, but as the avenger of the bloody sacrifice of a child; we sympathize with Orestes as the avenger of a father's murder. Œdipus and Jocasta are the victims of fate; to the latter not one light feeling or evil passion is imputed; and it is impossible to conceive a more dignified demeanour under humiliating circumstances than is assigned her in the play of Sophocles. We are interested for the former because his misfortunes exceed the measure of his crimes, so far as they were voluntary. In the Medea of Euripides it is the just punishment of Jason to which attention is directed; the Sorceress appears an avenging Fury in human form. These ancient dramas are staid and solemn in their procedure; they present to the mind awfully significant events, stern thoughts, and elevating reflections; they have no tendency to enervate and lower the tone of feeling. The corrupt drama, on the other hand, exhibits what is essentially base in a form as interesting as it can be made to assume; things in themselves "rank and gross," mean and contemptible, it arrays in a glittering veil of sentiment; its power consists in the force with which it appeals to the lowest and most easily excitable parts of man's nature.

How far this injurious character is fairly imputable to the play of Bertram readers will judge for themselves. That the author erred, if it be admitted that he did err, unconsciously, and considered his choice of subject to be quite within the legitimate range of tragedy, and justified by precedent, may be easily conceived: that he had talents and merits, both as a writer and a man, is not impugned either by the critique itself or these remarks upon it. S. C.]

## CHAPTER XI.

### CONCLUSION.

IT sometimes happens that we are punished for our faults by incidents, in the causation of which these faults had no share: and this I have always felt the severest punishment. The wound indeed is of the same dimensions; but the edges are jagged, and there is a dull underpain that survives the smart which it had aggravated. For there is always a consolatory feeling that accompanies the sense of a proportion between antecedents and consequents. The sense of Before and After becomes both intelligible and intellectual when, and *only* when, we contemplate the succession in the relations of Cause and Effect, which, like the two poles of the magnet manifest the being and unity of the one power by relative opposites, and give, as it were, a *substratum* of permanence, of identity, and therefore of reality, to the shadowy flux of Time. It is Eternity revealing itself in the *phænomena* of Time: and the perception and acknowledgment of the proportionality and appropriateness of the Present to the Past, prove to the afflicted Soul, that it has not yet been deprived of the sight of God, that it can still recognise the effective presence of a Father, though through a darkened glass and a turbid atmosphere, though of a Father that is chastising it. And for this cause, doubtless, are we so framed in mind, and even so organized in brain and nerve, that all confusion is painful. It is within the experience of many

medical practitioners, that a patient, with strange and unusual symptoms of disease, has been more distressed in mind, more wretched, from the fact of being unintelligible to himself and others, than from the pain or danger of the disease: nay, that the patient has received the most solid comfort, and resumed a genial and enduring cheerfulness, from some new symptom or product, that had at once determined the name and nature of his complaint, and rendered it an intelligible effect of an intelligible cause: even though the discovery did at the same moment preclude all hope of restoration. Hence the mystic theologians, whose delusions we may more confidently hope to separate from their actual intuitions, when we condescend to read their works without the presumption that whatever our fancy, (always the ape, and too often the adulterator and counterfeit of our memory,) has not made or cannot make a picture of, must be nonsense,—hence, I say, the Mystics have joined in representing the state of the reprobate spirits as a dreadful dream in which there is no sense of reality, not even of the pangs they are enduring—an eternity without time, and as it were below it—God present without manifestation of his presence. But these are depths, which we dare not linger over. Let us turn to an instance more on a level with the ordinary sympathies of mankind. Here then, and in this same healing influence of *Light* and distinct Beholding, we may detect the final cause of that instinct which, in the great majority of instances, leads, and almost compels the Afflicted to communicate their sorrows. Hence too flows the alleviation that results from "*opening out* our griefs:" which are thus presented in distinguishable forms instead of the mist, through which whatever is shapeless becomes magnified and (literally) *enormous*. Casimir, in the

fifth Ode of his third Book, has happily[1] expressed this thought.

*Me* longus silendi
Edit amor, facilesque luctus
Hausit medullas. Fugerit ocyus,
Simul negantem visere jusseris
Aures amicorum, et loquacem
Questibus evacuaris iram.

Olim querendo desinimûs queri,
Ipsoque fletu lacryma perditur:
Nec fortis[2] æque, si per omnes
Cura volat residetque ramos.

Vires amicis perdit in auribus,
Minorque semper dividitur dolor,
Per multa permissus vagari
Pectora.—

I shall not make this an excuse, however, for troubling my readers with any complaints or explanations, with which, as readers, they have little or no concern. It may suffice, (for the present at least,) to

[1] Classically too, as far as consists with the allegorizing fancy of the modern, that still *striving to project* the inward, contradistinguishes itself from the seeming ease with which the poetry of the ancients *reflects* the world without. Casimir affords, perhaps, the most striking instance of this characteristic difference. —For his *style* and *diction* are really classical: while Cowley, who resembles Casimir in many respects, completely barbarizes *his* Latinity, and even his metre, by the heterogeneous nature of his thoughts. That Dr. Johnson should have passed a contrary judgment, and have even preferred Cowley's Latin Poems to Milton's, is a caprice that has, if I mistake not, excited the surprise of all scholars. I was much amused last summer with the laughable affright, with which an Italian poet perused a page of Cowley's Davideis, contrasted with the enthusiasm with which he first ran through, and then read aloud, Milton's *Mansus* and *Ad Patrem*.

[2] *Flectit*, or if the metre had allowed, *premit* would have supported the metaphor better.

declare, that the causes that have delayed the publication of these volumes for so long a period after they had been printed off, were not connected with any neglect of my own; and that they would form an instructive comment on the chapter concerning *authorship as a trade*, addressed to young men of genius in the first volume of this work. I remember the ludicrous effect produced on my mind by the first sentence of an auto-biography, which, happily for the writer, was as meagre in incidents as it is well possible for the life of an individual to be—"The *eventful* life which I am about to record, from the hour in which I rose into existence on this planet, &c." Yet when, notwithstanding this warning example of self-importance before me, I review my own life, I cannot refrain from applying the same epithet to it, and with more than ordinary emphasis—and no private feeling, that affected myself only, should prevent me from *publishing* the same, (for *write* it I assuredly shall, should life and leisure be granted me,) if continued reflection should strengthen my present belief, that my history would add its contingent to the enforcement of one important truth, to wit, that we must not only love our neighbours as ourselves, but ourselves likewise as our neighbours; and that we can do neither unless we love God above both.

> Who lives, that's not
> Depraved or depraves? Who dies, *that bears*
> *Not one spurn to the grave—of their friends' gift?*[3]

Strange as the delusion may appear, yet it is most true, that three years ago I did not know or believe that I had an enemy in the world: and now even my strongest sensations of gratitude are mingled with fear,

[3] [*Timon of Athens.* Act I. Sc. II. "Their graves" in Shakespeare. S. C.]

and I reproach myself for being too often disposed to ask,—Have I one friend?—During the many years which intervened between the composition and the publication of the CHRISTABEL, it became almost as well known among literary men as if it had been on common sale; the same references were made to it, and the same liberties taken with it, even to the very names of the imaginary persons in the poem. From almost all of our most celebrated poets, and from some with whom I had no personal acquaintance, I either received or heard of expressions of admiration that, (I can truly say,) appeared to myself utterly disproportionate to a work, that pretended to be nothing more than a common Faery Tale. Many, who had allowed no merit to my other poems, whether printed or manuscript, and who have frankly told me as much, uniformly made an exception in favour of the CHRISTABEL and the poem entitled LOVE. Year after year, and in societies of the most different kinds, I had been entreated to recite it: and the result was still the same in all, and altogether different in this respect from the effect produced by the occasional recitation of any other poems I had composed.—This before the publication. And since then, with very few exceptions, I have heard nothing but abuse, and this too in a spirit of bitterness at least as disproportionate to the pretensions of the poem, had it been the most pitiably below mediocrity, as the previous eulogies, and far more inexplicable.—This may serve as a warning to authors, that in their calculations on the probable reception of a poem, they must subtract to a large amount from the panegyric, which may have encouraged them to publish it, however unsuspicious and however various the sources of this panegyric may have been. And, first, allowances must be made for private enmity, of the very existence of which they had perhaps entertained

no suspicion—for personal enmity behind the mask of anonymous criticism: secondly for the necessity of a certain proportion of abuse and ridicule in a Review, in order to make it saleable, in consequence of which, if they have no friends behind the scenes, the chance must needs be against them; but lastly and chiefly, for the excitement and temporary sympathy of feeling, which the recitation of the poem by an admirer, especially if he be at once a warm admirer and a man of acknowledged celebrity, calls forth in the audience. For this is really a species of animal magnetism, in which the enkindling reciter, by perpetual comment of looks and tones, lends his own will and apprehensive faculty to his auditors. They *live* for the time within the dilated sphere of his intellectual being. It is equally possible, though not equally common, that a reader left to himself should sink below the poem, as that the poem left to itself should flag beneath the feelings of the reader.—But, in my own instance, I had the additional misfortune of having been gossiped about, as devoted to metaphysics, and worse than all, to a system incomparably nearer to the visionary flights of Plato, and even to the jargon of the Mystics, than to the established tenets of Locke. Whatever therefore appeared with my name was condemned beforehand, as predestined metaphysics. In a dramatic poem, which had been submitted by me to a gentleman of great influence in the theatrical world, occurred the following passage:—

> "O we are querulous creatures! Little less
> Than all things can suffice to make us happy:
> And little more than nothing is enough
> To make us wretched."[4]

[4] [Coleridge's Poetical Works, p. 270. S. C.]

Aye, here now! (exclaimed the critic) here come Coleridge's *metaphysics!* And the very same motive (that is, not that the lines were unfit for the present state of our immense theatres; but that they were *metaphysics*[5]) was assigned elsewhere for the rejection of the two following passages. The first is spoken in answer to a usurper, who had rested his plea on the circumstance, that he had been chosen by the acclamations of the people.—

"What people? How convened? or, if convened,
Must not the magic power that charms together
Millions of men in council, needs have power
To win or wield them? Rather, O far rather
Shout forth thy titles to yon circling mountains,
And with a thousand-fold reverberation
Make the rocks flatter thee, and the volleying air,
Unbribed, shout back to thee, King Emerick!
By wholesome laws to embank the sovereign power,
To deepen by restraint, and by prevention
Of lawless will to amass and guide the flood
In its majestic channel, is man's task
And the true patriot's glory! In all else
Men safelier trust to Heaven, than to themselves
When least themselves: even in those whirling crowds
Where folly is contagious, and too oft
Even wise men leave their better sense at home,
To chide and wonder at them, when returned."[6]

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[5] Poor unlucky Metaphysicks! and what are they? A single sentence expresses the object and thereby the contents of this science. Γνῶθι σεαυτόν:

*Nosce te ipsum,*
*Tuque Deum, quantum licet, inque Deo omnia noscas.*

Know thyself: and so shalt thou know God, as far as is permitted to a creature, and in God all things.—Surely, there is a strange—nay, rather a too natural—aversion in many to know themselves.

[6] [Coleridge's Poetical Works, p. 258. S. C.]

The second passage is in the mouth of an old and experienced courtier, betrayed by the man in whom he had most trusted.

> " And yet Sarolta, simple, inexperienced,
> Could see him as he was, and often warned me.
> Whence learned she this?—O she was innocent!
> And to be innocent is Nature's wisdom!
> The fledge-dove knows the prowlers of the air,
> Feared soon as seen, and flutters back to shelter.
> And the young steed recoils upon his haunches,
> The never-yet-seen adder's hiss first heard.
> O surer than suspicion's hundred eyes
> Is that fine sense, which to the pure in heart,
> By mere oppugnancy of their own goodness,
> Reveals the approach of evil." [7]

As therefore my character as a writer could not easily be more injured by an overt act than it was already in consequence of the report, I published a work, a large portion of which was professedly metaphysical. A long delay occurred between its first announciation and its appearance; it was reviewed therefore by anticipation with a malignity, so avowedly and exclusively personal, as is, I believe, unprecedented even in the present contempt of all common humanity that disgraces and endangers the liberty of the press.[8] After its appearance, the author of this lampoon undertook to review it in the Edinburgh Review; and under the single condition, that he should have written what he himself really thought, and have criticised the

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[7] [Coleridge's Poetical Works, p. 323. S. C.]

[8] [Political Essays by William Hazlitt, p. 118, *et seq.* "It may be proper to notice," says a note to the Essay on the Lay Sermon, "that this article was written before the Discourse, which it professes to criticise, had appeared in print." There

work as he would have done had its author been indifferent to him, I should have chosen that man myself,

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is some wit in this libel caricature: it is unlike those portraits of my Father, scrawled in the dark, by enemies, who had no sense of his character and genius; but looks like a minute study from life curiously distorted in every part, and with every distortion enormously magnified. Many of these distortions are injurious falsehoods: as for instance. "He takes his notions of religion from the 'sublime piety' of Giordano Bruno, and *considers a belief in God as a very subordinate question to the worship of the three persons of the Trinity*. The Thirty-nine Articles and Athanasius's Creed are, upon the same principle, much more fundamental parts of the Christian religion than the miracles or Gospel of Christ. He makes *the essence of devotion to consist in Atheism*, the perfection of morality in a total disregard of consequences. He defines Jacobinism to be an abstract attachment to liberty, truth, and justice; and finding that this principle has been abused and carried to excess, he argues that Anti-Jacobinism, or the abstract principles of despotism, superstition, and oppression, are the safe, sure, and undeniable remedy for the former, and the only means of restoring liberty, truth, and justice in the world." (The italics are mine.)

Any one who compares this rhapsody and the review of the Lay Sermon *after* its appearance, in the Political Essays, with the article on that production in the Edinburgh Review, must see that they are by the same hand; only that the Scorner of the Edinboro' is a degree more cold, hard, and unrelenting than the lampooner of the Essays: to the latter, "even as it is," S. T. Coleridge "hardly appears

> Less than arch-angel ruined and the excess
> Of glory obscured;"

—the former keeps his *glory* well muffled up in clouds of affected contempt and genuine political hatred: yet it beams through a little in spite of him, and such abuse is more complimentary than many a panegyric. The review of *Christabel* (two sentences relating to the supposed authorship of which are removed from the text,) shows its political *animus* at the end. After declaring that the poem exhibits "not a ray of genius,"

both from the vigour and the originality of his mind, and from his particular acuteness in speculative reasoning, before all others.—I remembered Catullus's lines,

Desine de quoquam quicquam bene velle mereri,
Aut aliquem fieri posse putare pium.
Omnia sunt ingrata: nihil fecisse benigne est:
Immo, etiam tædet, tædet obestque magis;
Ut mihi, quem nemo gravius nec acerbius urget,
Quam modo qui me unum atque unicum amicum habuit.

But I can truly say, that the grief with which I read this rhapsody of predetermined insult, had the rhapsodist himself for its whole and sole object.[9]

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that no other productions of the Lake school, except the White Doe and some of the laureate odes, is so devoid of any "gleam of feeling or of fancy," the writer indignantly exclaims, "Must we then be doomed to hear such a mixture of raving and driv'ling, extolled as the work of a "*wild and original genius*," simply because Mr. C. has now and then written fine verses, and a brother poet chooses, in his milder mood, to laud him from courtesy or from interest? And are such panegyrics to be echoed by the mean tools of a political faction, because they relate to one whose daily prose is understood to be dedicated to the support of all that courtiers think should be supported!" Who the partisans were that exerted themselves to *cram my Father's nonsense and bad poetry* "down the throats of all the loyal and well affected," it would be hard to discover,

And much like Samson's riddle, in one day
Or seven, though one should musing sit.

Many a fierce article may be taken for an ordinary wild ass of criticism, till it lifts up the beak and claws of the political satirist, and thus shows itself to be a sort of hippogriff. S. C.]

[9] "*Mr. Coleridge's Description of a Green Field.*"

[With these words the Edinburgh Reviewer announces and holds up to ridicule the following passage from the notes to the

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I refer to this review at present, in consequence of information having been given me, that the inuendo of my "potential infidelity," grounded on one passage of my first Lay Sermon, has been received and propagated with a degree of credence, of which I can safely acquit the originator of the calumny. I give the sentences, as they stand in the sermon, premising only that I was speaking exclusively of miracles worked for the outward senses of men. "It was only to overthrow the usurpation exercised in and through the

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Lay Sermon. After the quotation he concludes with, "This will do. It is well observed by Hobbes, that 'it is by words only that a man becometh excellently wise or excellently foolish.'"

"I have at this moment before me, in the flowery meadow, on which my eye is now reposing, one of its most soothing chapters, in which there is no lamenting word, no one character of guilt or anguish. For never can I look and meditate on the vegetable creation without a feeling similar to that with which we gaze at a beautiful infant that has fed itself asleep at its mother's bosom, and smiles in its strange dream of obscure yet happy sensations. The same tender and genial pleasure takes possession of me, and this pleasure is checked and drawn inward by the like aching melancholy, by the same whispered remonstrance, and made restless by a similar impulse of aspiration. It seems as if the soul said to herself: From this state hast thou fallen! Such shouldst thou still become, thy self all permeable to a holier power! thy self at once hidden and glorified by its own transparency, as the accidental and dividuous in this quiet and harmonious object is subjected to the life and light of nature; to that life and light of nature, I say, which shines in every plant and flower, even as the transmitted power, love and wisdom of God over all fills, and shines through, nature! But what the plant is by an act not its own and unconsciously—that must thou make thyself to become—must by prayer and by a watchful and unresisting spirit, join at least with the preventive and assisting grace to make thyself, in that

senses, that the senses were miraculously appealed to. REASON AND RELIGION ARE THEIR OWN EVIDENCE. The natural sun is in this respect a symbol of the spiritual. Ere he is fully arisen, and while his glories are still under veil, he calls up the breeze to chase away the usurping vapours of the night-season, and thus converts the air itself into the minister of its own purification: not surely in proof or elucidation of the light from heaven, but to prevent its interception."

"Wherever, therefore, similar circumstances coexist with the same moral causes, the principles revealed, and the examples recorded, in the inspired writings, render miracles superfluous: and if we neg-

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light of conscience which inflameth not, and with that knowledge which puffeth not up!" pp. 267-8.—ed. 1839.

I cannot help thinking how Mr. Hazlitt (if Mr. C. was right in ascribing the review of the Lay Sermon in the Edinburgh Review to his pen,) must have smiled to himself, as he thus concluded his article, at the anticipated gullibility of his readers, who, if the Northern Oracle had cried out in derision at the Cupid of Praxiteles, would straightway have begun to throw stones at the statue. For *he* in his heart admired, as he has eloquently described, the poetic fervour of my Father's mind, so characteristically displayed in this excerpt, which seems to me as emblematic of the soft, rich, radiant imagination of its author as the red-hot cones of the city of Dis are emblematic of the fiery genius of Dante. And in *him* only the will was wanting to appreciate the *sense* of the passage; for surely it conveys sound *sense*, as *true* poetry ever does, and teaches the highest doctrine of the spirit in language not unworthy of such a theme. True enough it is that by words a man becometh excellently wise or excellently foolish; and perhaps there is no one thing in which the power of folly in words is more thoroughly manifested, than in that sort of designing shallowness and clever crafty superficiality, assumed for the sake of sneering depreciation; and even of insidious defamation, of which this review of the Lay Sermon is a notable specimen. S. C.]

lect to apply truths in expectation of wonders, or under pretext of the cessation of the latter, we tempt God, and merit the same reply which our Lord gave to the Pharisees on a like occasion."[10]

In the sermon and the notes both the historical truth and the necessity of the miracles are strongly and frequently asserted. "The testimony of books of history (that is, relatively to the signs and wonders, with which Christ came) is one of the strong and stately *pillars* of the church; but it is not the *foundation!*"[11] Instead, therefore, of defending myself, which I could easily effect by a series of passages, expressing the same opinion, from the Fathers and the most eminent Protestant Divines, from the Reformation to the Revolution, I shall merely state what my belief is, concerning the true evidences of Christianity. 1. Its consistency with right Reason, I consider as the outer court of the temple—the common area, within which it stands. 2. The miracles, with and through which the Religion was first revealed and attested, I regard as the steps, the vestibule, and the portal of the temple. 3. The sense, the inward feeling, in the soul of each believer of its exceeding *desirableness*—the experience, that he *needs* something, joined with the strong foretokening, that the redemption and the graces propounded to us in Christ are *what* he needs—this I hold to be the true foundation of the spiritual Edifice. With the strong *à priori* probability that flows in from 1 and 3 on the correspondent historical evidence of 2, no man can refuse or neglect to make the experiment without guilt. But, 4, it is the experience derived from a practical conformity to the conditions

[10] [First Lay Sermon, pp. 210-11. Last edit. S. C.]
[11] [Note N. to First L. S. p. 238. S. C.]

of the Gospel—it is the opening eye; the dawning light: the terrors and the promises of spiritual growth; the blessedness of loving God as God, the nascent sense of sin hated as sin, and of the incapability of attaining to either without Christ; it is the sorrow that still rises up from beneath and the consolation that meets it from above; the bosom treacheries of the principal in the warfare and the exceeding faithfulness and long-suffering of the uninterested ally;—in a word, it is the actual *trial* of the faith in Christ; with its accompaniments and results, that must form the arched roof, and the faith itself is the completing key-stone. In order to an efficient belief in Christianity, a man must have been a Christian, and this is the seeming *argumentum in circulo,* incident to all spiritual Truths, to every subject not presentable under the forms of Time and Space, as long as we attempt to master by the reflex acts of the Understanding what we can only *know* by the act of *becoming*. *Do the will of my Father, and ye shall know whether I am of God.*[12] These four evidences I believe to have been and still to be, for the world, for the whole Church, all necessary, all equally necessary: but at present, and for the majority of Christians born in Christian countries, I believe the third and the fourth evidences to be the most operative, not as superseding but as involving a glad undoubting faith in the two former. *Credidi, ideoque intellexi,* appears to me the dictate equally of Philosophy and Religion, even as I believe Redemption to be the antecedent of Sanctification, and not its consequent. All spiritual predicates may be construed indifferently as modes of Action or as states of Being. Thus Holiness and Blessedness are

[12] [John vii. 17. S. C.]

the same idea, now seen in relation to act and now to existence. The ready belief which has been yielded to the slander of my "potential infidelity," I attribute in part to the openness with which I have avowed my doubts, whether the heavy interdict, under which the name of Benedict Spinoza lies, is merited on the whole or to the whole extent. Be this as it may, I wish, however, that I could find in the books of philosophy, theoretical or moral, which are alone recommended to the present students of theology in our established schools, a few passages as thoroughly Pauline, as completely accordant with the doctrines of the Established Church, as the following sentences in the concluding page of Spinoza's Ethics. *Deinde quo mens hoc amore divino, seu beatitudine magis gaudet, eo plus* intelligit, *hoc est, eo majorem in affectus habet potentiam, et eo minus ab affectibus, qui mali sunt, patitur; atque adeo ex eo, quod mens hoc amore divino, seu beatitudine gaudet, potestatem habet libidines coërcendi; et quia humana potentia ad coërcendos affectus in solo intellectu consistit; ergo nemo beatitudine gaudet, quia affectus coërcuit, sed contra potestas libidines coërcendi ex ipsa beatitudine oritur.*[13]

With regard to the Unitarians, it has been shamelessly asserted, that I have denied them to be Christians. God forbid! For how should I know, what the piety of the heart may be, or what *quantum* of error in the understanding may consist with a saving faith in the intentions and actual dispositions of the whole moral being in any one individual? Never will God reject a soul that sincerely loves him: be his speculative opinions what they may: and whether in any

[13] [*Ethices Pars V. De Libertate humana.* S. C.]

given instance certain opinions, be they unbelief, or misbelief, are compatible with a sincere love of God, God can only know.—But this I have said, and shall continue to say: that if the doctrines, the sum of which I *believe* to constitute the truth in Christ, *be* Christianity, then Unitarian*ism* is not, and *vice versa:* and that, in speaking theologically and *impersonally*, i. e. of Psilanthropism and Theanthropism as schemes of belief, without reference to individuals, who profess either the one or the other, it will be absurd to use a different language as long as it is the dictate of common sense, that two opposites cannot properly be called by the same name. I should feel no offence if a Unitarian applied the same to me, any more than if he were to say, that two and two being four, four and four must be eight.

ἀλλὰ βροτῶν
τὸν μὲν κενεόφρονες αὔχαι
ἐξ ἀγαθῶν ἔβαλον·
τὸν δ' αὖ καταμεμφθέντ' ἄγαν
ἰσχὺν οἰκείων παρέσφαλεν καλῶν,
χειρὸς ἕλκων ὀπίσσω, θυμὸς ἄτολμος ἐών.[14]

This has been my object, and this alone can be my defence—and O! that with this my personal as well as my LITERARY LIFE might conclude!—the unquenched desire I mean, not without the consciousness of having earnestly endeavoured to kindle young minds, and to guard them against the temptations of scorners, by showing that the scheme of Christianity, as taught in the liturgy and homilies of our Church, though not discoverable by human reason, is yet in accordance with it; that link follows link by necessary

[14] [Pindar. Nem. Carm. XI. l. 37. S. C.]

consequence; that Religion passes out of the ken of Reason only where the eye of Reason has reached its own horizon; and that Faith is then but its continuation: even as the day softens away into the sweet twilight, and twilight, hushed and breathless, steals into the darkness. It is night, sacred night! the upraised eye views only the starry heaven which manifests itself alone: and the outward beholding is fixed on the sparks twinkling in the awful depth, though suns of other worlds, only to preserve the soul steady and collected in its pure *act* of inward adoration to the great I AM, and to the filial WORD that re-affirmeth it from eternity to eternity, whose choral echo is the universe.

ΘΕΩι ΜΟΝΩι ΔΟΞΑ.

# BIOGRAPHICAL SUPPLEMENT

## TO THE BIOGRAPHIA LITERARIA.

*By the late H. N. Coleridge, Esq. M.A. .*

## CHAPTER I.

[1772 to 1791.]

While here, thou fed'st upon etherial beams,
As if thou had'st not a terrestrial birth;—
Beyond material objects was thy sight;
In the clouds woven was thy lucid robe!
*Ah! who can tell how little for this sphere*
*That frame was fitted of empyreal fire!*[1]

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE was the youngest child of the Reverend John Coleridge, Chaplain-Priest and Vicar of the parish of Ottery St. Mary, in the county of Devon, and Master of the Free Grammar, or King's School, as it is called, founded by Henry VIII. in that town. His mother's maiden name was Ann Bowdon. He was born at Ottery on the 21st of October 1772, "about eleven o'clock in the forenoon," as his father, the Vicar, has, with rather unusual particularity, entered it in the register.

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[1] [From a Sonnet To Coleridge by Sir Egerton Brydges—written 16th Feb. 1837. S. C.]

John Coleridge, who was born in 1719, and finished his education at Sidney-Sussex College, Cambridge,[2] was a country clergyman and schoolmaster of no ordinary kind. He was a good Greek and Latin scholar, a profound Hebraist, and, according to the measure of his day, an accomplished mathematician. He was on terms of literary friendship with Samuel Badcock, and, by his knowledge of Hebrew, rendered material assistance to Dr. Kennicott, in his well known critical works. Some curious papers on theological and antiquarian subjects appear with his signature in the early numbers of The Gentleman's Magazine, between the years 1745 and 1780; almost all of which have been inserted in the interesting volumes of Selections made several years ago from that work. In 1768 he published miscellaneous Dissertations arising from the 17th and 18th chapters of the Book of Judges; in which a very learned and ingenious attempt is made to relieve the character of Micah from the charge of idolatry ordinarily brought against it; and in 1772 appeared a 'Critical Latin Grammar,' which his son called 'his best work,' and which is not wholly unknown even now to the inquisitive by the proposed substitution of the terms 'prior, possessive, attributive, posterior, interjective, and quale-quare-quidditive,' for the vulgar names of the cases. This little Grammar, however, deserves a philologer's perusal, and is indeed in many respects a very valuable work in its kind. He also published a Latin Exercise book, and a Sermon. His school was celebrated, and most of the country gentlemen of that generation, belonging to the south and east parts of Devon, had been his pupils. Judge Buller was one. The amiable character and personal eccentricities of this excellent man are not yet forgotten amongst some of the elders of the parish and neighbourhood, and the latter, as is usual in such cases, have been greatly exaggerated. He died suddenly in the month of October 1781, after riding to Ottery from Plymouth, to which latter place he had gone

[2] [He was matriculated at Sidney a sizar on the 18th of March 1748, but does not appear to have taken any degree at the University. S. C.]

for the purpose of embarking his son Francis, as a midshipman, for India.

Many years afterwards, in 1797, S. T. Coleridge commenced a series of Letters to his friend Thomas Poole, of Nether Stowey, in the county of Somerset, in which he proposed to give an account of his life up to that time. Five only were written, and unfortunately they stop short of his residence at Cambridge. This series will properly find a place here.

I.

*To Mr. Poole.*

"MY DEAR POOLE,

"I COULD inform the dullest author how he might write an interesting book. Let him relate the events of his own life with honesty, not disguising the feelings that accompanied them. I never yet read even a Methodist's 'Experience' in the Gospel Magazine without receiving instruction and amusement; and I should almost despair of that man who could peruse the Life of John Woolman without an amelioration of heart. As to my Life, it has all the charms of variety,—high life and low life, vices and virtues, great folly and some wisdom. However, what I am depends on what I have been; and you, my best friend, have a right to the narration. To me the task will be a useful one. It will renew and deepen my reflections on the past; and it will perhaps make you behold with no unforgiving or impatient eye those weaknesses and defects in my character, which so many untoward circumstances have concurred in planting there.

"My family on my Mother's side can be traced up, I know not how far. The Bowdons inherited a good farm and house thereon in the Exmoor country, in the reign of Elizabeth, as I have been told; and to my knowledge they have inherited nothing better since that time. My Grandfather was in the reign of George I. a considerable woollen trader in Southmolton; so that I suppose, when the time comes, I shall be allowed to pass as a *Sans-culotte* without much opposition. My Father received a better education than

the rest of his family in consequence of his own exertions, not of his superiour advantages. When he was not quite sixteen years of age, my grandfather, by a series of misfortunes, was reduced to great distress. My Father received the half of his last crown and his blessing, and walked off to seek his fortune. After he had proceeded a few miles, he sate him down on the side of the road, so overwhelmed with painful thoughts that he wept audibly. A gentleman passed by who knew him, and, inquiring into his sorrow, took him home and gave him the means of maintaining himself by placing him in a school. At this time he commenced being a severe and ardent student. He married his first wife by whom he had three daughters, all now alive. While his first wife lived, having scraped up money enough, he at the age of twenty walked to Cambridge, entered himself at Sidney College, distinguished himself in Hebrew and Mathematics, and might have had a fellowship if he had not been married. He returned and settled as a schoolmaster in Southampton where his wife died. In 1760 he was appointed Chaplain-Priest and Master of the School at Ottery St. Mary, and removed to that place; and in August, 1760, Mr. Buller, the father of the present Judge, procured for him the living from Lord Chancellor Bathurst. By my Mother, his second wife, he had ten children, of whom I am the youngest, born October 20th,[1] 1772.

"These facts I received from my Mother; but I am utterly unable to fill them up by any further particulars of times, or places, or names. Here I shall conclude my first Letter, because I cannot pledge myself for the accuracy of the accounts, and I will not therefore mingle it with that for the truth of which, in the minutest parts, I shall hold myself responsible. You must regard this Letter as a first chapter devoted to dim traditions of times too remote to be pierced by the eye of investigation.

"Yours affectionately,

"Feb. 1797. Monday. S. T. COLERIDGE."

[1] A mistake.

II.

*To Mr. Poole.*

"MY DEAR POOLE,

"MY Father (Vicar of, and Schoolmaster at, Ottery St. Mary, Devon) was a good mathematician, and well versed in the Greek, Latin, and Hebrew languages. He published, or rather attempted to publish, several works;—1st, Miscellaneous Dissertations arising from the 17th and 18th chapters of the Book of Judges; 2d, *Sententiæ Excerptæ* for the use of his own School; and 3d, his best work, a Critical Latin Grammar, in the Preface to which he proposes a bold innovation in the names of the cases. My Father's new nomenclature was not likely to become popular, although it must be allowed to be both sonorous and expressive. *Exempli gratia*, he calls the ablative case 'the quare-quale-quidditive case!' He made the world his confidant with respect to his learning and ingenuity, and the world seems to have kept the secret very faithfully. His various works, uncut, unthumbed, were preserved free from all pollution in the family archives, where they may still be for anything that I know. This piece of good luck promises to be hereditary; for all *my* compositions have the same amiable home-staying propensity. The truth is, my Father was not a first-rate genius; he was, however, a first-rate Christian, which is much better. I need not detain you with his character. In learning, goodheartedness, absentness of mind, and excessive ignorance of the world, he was a perfect Parson Adams.

"My Mother was an admirable economist, and managed exclusively. My eldest brother's name was John. He was a Captain in the East India Company's service; a successful officer and a brave one, as I have heard. He died in India in 1786. My second brother William went to Pembroke College, Oxford. He died a clergyman in 1780, just on the eve of his intended marriage. My brother James has been in the army since the age of fifteen, and has married a woman of fortune, one of the old Duke family of Otterton in Devon. Edward, the wit of the family, went to Pem-

broke College, and is now a clergyman. George also went to Pembroke. He is in orders likewise, and now has the same School, a very flourishing one, which my Father had. He is a man of reflective mind and elegant talent. He possesses learning in a greater degree than any of the family, excepting myself. His manners are grave, and hued over with a tender sadness. In his moral character he approaches every way nearer to perfection than any man I ever yet knew. He is worth us all. Luke Herman was a surgeon, a severe student, and a good man. He died in 1790, leaving one child, a lovely boy still alive.[1] My only sister, Ann, died at twenty-one, a little after my brother Luke:—

> Rest, gentle Shade! and wait thy Maker's will;
> Then rise unchang'd, and be an angel still!

Francis-Syndercombe went out to India as a midshipman under Admiral Graves. He accidentally met his brother John on board ship abroad, who took him ashore, and procured him a commission in the Company's army. He died in 1792, aged twenty-one, a Lieutenant, in consequence of a fever brought on by excessive fatigue at and after the siege of Seringapatam, and the storming of a hill fort, during all which his conduct had been so gallant that his Commanding Officer particularly noticed him, and presented *him* with a gold watch, which my Mother now has. All my brothers are remarkably handsome; but they were as inferiour to Francis as I am to them. He went by the name of "the handsome Coleridge." The tenth and last child was Samuel Taylor, the subject and author of these Epistles.

"From October 1772 to October 1773. Baptized Samuel Taylor, my Godfather's name being Samuel Taylor, Esquire. I had another called Evans, and two Godmothers, both named Munday.

"From October 1773 to October 1774. In this year I was carelessly left by my nurse, ran to the fire, and pulled

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[1] William Hart Coleridge, the present Bishop of Barbadoes and the Leeward Islands.

[He was appointed to that See in 1824, retired from it in 1842; has lately accepted the Wardenship of St. Augustine's College, Canterbury. S. C.]

out a live coal, and burned myself dreadfully. While my hand was being drest by Mr. Young, I spoke for the first time, (so my Mother informs me) and said, "nasty Doctor Young!" The snatching at fire, and the circumstance of my first words expressing hatred to professional men—are they at all ominous? This year I went to school. My Schoolmistress, the very image of Shenstone's, was named Old Dame Key. She was nearly related to Sir Joshua Reynolds.

"From October 1774 to 1775. I was inoculated; which I mention, because I distinctly remember it, and that my eyes were bound; at which I manifested so much obstinate indignation, that at last they removed the bandage, and unaffrighted I looked at the lancet, and suffered the scratch. At the close of this year I could read a chapter in the Bible.

"Here I shall end, because the remaining years of my life all assisted to form my particular mind;—the first three years had nothing in them that seems to relate to it.

"God bless you and your sincere

"Sunday, March, 1797." "S. T. COLERIDGE."

A letter from Francis S. Coleridge to his sister has been preserved in the family, in which a particular account is given of the chance meeting of the two brothers in India, mentioned shortly in the preceding Letter. There is something so touching and romantic in the incident that the Reader will, it is hoped, pardon the insertion of the original narrative here.

"DEAR NANCY,

"YOU are very right, I have neglected my absent friends, but do not think I have forgot them, and indeed it would be ungrateful in me if I did not write to them.

"You may be sure, Nancy, I thank Providence for bringing about that meeting, which has been the cause of all my good fortune and happiness, which I now in fulness enjoy. It was an affectionate meeting, and I will inform you of the particulars. There was in our ship one Captain Mordaunt, who had been in India before, when we came to Bombay. Finding a number of his friends there he went often ashore.

The day before the Fleet sailed he desired one Captain Welsh to go aboard with him, who was an intimate friend of your brother's. "I will," said Welsh, "and will write a note to Coleridge to go with us." Upon this Captain Mordaunt, recollecting me, said there was a young midshipman, a favourite of Captain Hicks, of that name on board. Upon that they agreed to inform my brother of it, which they did soon after, and all three came on board. I was then in the lower deck, and, though you won't believe it, I was sitting upon a gun and thinking of my brother, that is, whether I should ever see or hear anything of him; when seeing a Lieutenant, who had been sent to inform me of my brother's being on board, I got up off the gun: but instead of telling me about my brother, he told me that Captain Hicks was very angry with me and wanted to see me. Captain Hicks had always been a Father to me, and loved me as if I had been his own child. I therefore went up shaking like an aspen leaf to the Lieutenant's apartments, when a Gentleman took hold of my hand. I did not mind him at first, but looked round for the Captain; but the Gentleman still holding my hand, I looked, and what was my surprise, when I saw him too full to speak and his eyes full of tears. Whether crying is catching I know not, but I began a crying too, though I did not know the reason, till he caught me in his arms, and told me he was my brother, and then I found I was paying nature her tribute, for I believe I never cried so much in my life. There is a saying in Robinson Crusoe, I remember very well, viz.—sudden joy like grief confounds at first. We directly went ashore having got my discharge, and having took a most affectionate leave of Captain Hicks, I left the ship for good and all."

"My situation in the army is that I am one of the oldest Ensigns, and before you get this must in all probability be a Lieutenant. How many changes there have been in my life, and what lucky ones they have been, and how young I am still! I must be seven years older before I can properly style myself a man, and what a number of officers do I command, who are old enough to be my Father already!" * * * * *

## III.

### *To Mr. Poole.*

"MY DEAREST POOLE, *October 9th*, 1797.

"FROM March to October—a long silence! But it is possible that I may have been preparing materials for future Letters, and the time cannot be considered as altogether subtracted from you.

"From October 1775 to October 1778. These three years I continued at the Reading School, because I was too little to be trusted among my Father's schoolboys. After breakfast I had a halfpenny given me, with which I bought three cakes at the baker's shop close by the school of my old mistress; and these were my dinner every day except Saturday and Sunday, when I used to dine at home, and wallowed in a beef and pudding dinner. I am remarkably fond of beans and bacon; and this fondness I attribute to my Father's giving me a penny for having eaten a large quantity of beans on Saturday. For the other boys did not like them, and, as it was an economic food, my Father thought my attachment to it ought to be encouraged. He was very fond of me, and I was my Mother's darling: in consequence whereof I was very miserable. For Molly, who had nursed my brother Francis, and was immoderately fond of him, hated me because my Mother took more notice of me than of Frank; and Frank hated me because my Mother gave me now and then a bit of cake when he had none,—quite forgetting that for one bit of cake which I had and he had not, he had twenty sops in the pan, and pieces of bread and butter with sugar on them from Molly, from whom I received only thumps and ill names!

"So I became fretful, and timorous, and a tell-tale; and the schoolboys drove me from play, and were always tormenting me. And hence I took no pleasure in boyish sports, but read incessantly. I read through all gilt-cover little books that could be had at that time, and likewise all the uncovered tales of Tom Hickathrift, Jack the Giant Killer, and the like. And I used to lie by the wall, and mope;

and my spirits used to come upon me suddenly, and in a flood;—and then I was accustomed to run up and down the churchyard, and act over again all I had been reading on the docks, the nettles, and the rank grass. At six years of age I remember to have read Belisarius, Robinson Crusoe, and Philip Quarles; and then I found the Arabian Nights' Entertainments, one tale of which, (the tale of a man who was compelled to seek for a pure virgin,) made so deep an impression on me, (I had read it in the evening while my mother was at her needle,) that I was haunted by spectres, whenever I was in the dark: and I distinctly recollect the anxious and fearful eagerness, with which I used to watch the window where the book lay, and when the sun came upon it, I would seize it, carry it by the wall, and bask, and read. My father found out the effect which these books had produced, and burned them.

"So I became a dreamer, and acquired an indisposition to all bodily activity; and I was fretful, and inordinately passionate; and as I could not play at anything, and was slothful, I was despised and hated by the boys: and because I could read and spell, and had, I may truly say, a memory and understanding forced into almost unnatural ripeness, I was flattered and wondered at by all the old women. And so I became very vain, and despised most of the boys that were at all near my own age, and before I was eight years old I was a *character*. Sensibility, imagination, vanity, sloth, and feelings of deep and bitter contempt for almost all who traversed the orbit of my understanding, were even then prominent and manifest.

"From October 1778 to 1779. That which I began to be from three to six, I continued to be from six to nine. In this year I was admitted into the Grammar School, and soon outstripped all of my age. I had a dangerous putrid fever this year. My brother George lay ill of the same fever in the next room. My poor brother, Francis, I remember, stole up in spite of orders to the contrary, and sat by my bedside, and read Pope's Homer to me. Frank had a violent love of beating me; but whenever that was superseded by any humour or circumstances, he was always very

fond of me, and used to regard me with a strange mixture of admiration and contempt. Strange it was not, for he hated books, and loved climbing, fighting, playing, and robbing orchards, to distraction.

"My Mother relates a story of me, which I repeat here, because it must be reckoned as my first piece of wit.—During my fever, I asked why Lady Northcote, our neighbour, did not come and see me. My Mother said she was afraid of catching the fever. I was piqued, and answered, 'Ah! Mamma! the four Angels round my bed a'n't afraid of catching it!' I suppose you know the old prayer:—

> 'Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John,
> Bless the bed that I lie on!—
> Four good Angels round me spread,
> Two at my feet and two at my head.'

This *prayer* I said nightly, and most firmly believed the truth of it. Frequently have I, (half-awake and half-asleep; my body diseased, and fevered by my imagination,) —seen armies of ugly things bursting in upon me, and these four Angels keeping them off.

"In my next I shall carry on my life to my Father's death. "God bless you, my dear Poole,

"And your affectionate,

"S. T. COLERIDGE."

In a note written in after life Mr. Coleridge speaks of this period of his life in the following terms:

"Being the youngest child, I possibly inherited the weakly state of health of my Father, who died, at the age of sixty-two, before I had reached my ninth year; and from certain jealousies of old Molly, my brother Frank's dotingly fond nurse—and if ever child by beauty and loveliness deserved to be doted on, my brother Francis was that child—and by the infusion of her jealousies into my brother's mind, I was in earliest childhood huffed away from the enjoyments of muscular activity in play, to take refuge at my Mother's side on my little stool, to read my little book, and to listen to the talk of my elders. I was driven from life in

motion to life in thought and sensation. I never played except by myself, and then only acted over what I had been reading or fancying, or half one, half the other, with a stick cutting down weeds and nettles, as one of the 'Seven Champions of Christendom.' Alas! I had all the simplicity, all the docility of the little child, but none of the child's habits. I never thought as a child, never had the language of a child."

## IV.

*To Mr. Poole.*

"DEAR POOLE,

"FROM October 1779 to 1781. I had asked my Mother one evening to cut my cheese entire, so that I might toast it. This was no easy matter, it being a *crumbly* cheese. My Mother however did it. I went into the garden for something or other, and in the mean time my brother Frank minced my cheese, to 'disappoint the favourite.' I returned, saw the exploit, and in an agony of passion flew at Frank. He pretended to have been seriously hurt by my blow, flung himself on the ground, and there lay with outstretched limbs. I hung over him mourning and in a great fright; he leaped up, and with a horse laugh gave me a severe blow in the face. I seized a knife, and was running at him, when my mother came in and took me by the arm. I expected a flogging, and, struggling from her, I ran away to a little hill or slope, at the bottom of which the Otter flows, about a mile from Ottery. There I staid; my rage died away, but my obstinacy vanquished my fears, and taking out a shilling book, which had at the end morning and evening prayers, I very devoutly repeated them —thinking at the same time with a gloomy inward satisfaction—how miserable my Mother must be! I distinctly remember my feelings, when I saw a Mr. Vaughan pass over the bridge at about a furlong's distance, and how I watched the calves in the fields beyond the river. It grew dark, and I fell asleep. It was towards the end of October, and it proved a stormy night. I felt the cold in my sleep, and dreamed that I was pulling the blanket over me, and ac-

tually pulled over me a dry thorn-bush which lay on the ground near me. In my sleep I had rolled from the top of the hill till within three yards of the river, which flowed by the unfenced edge of the bottom. I awoke several times, and finding myself wet, and cold, and stiff, closed my eyes again that I might forget it.

" In the mean time my Mother waited about half an hour, expecting my return when the *sulks* had evaporated. I not returning, she sent into the churchyard, and round the town. Not found! Several men and all the boys were sent out to ramble about and seek me. In vain! My Mother was almost distracted; and at ten o'clock at night I was *cried* by the crier in Ottery, and in two villages near it, with a reward offered for me. No one went to bed;—indeed I believe half the town were up all the night. To return to myself. About five in the morning, or a little after, I was broad awake, and attempted to get up, and walk; but I could not move. I saw the shepherds and workmen at a distance, and cried, but so faintly, that it was impossible to hear me thirty yards off. And there I might have lain and died;—for I was now almost given over, the ponds and even the river, near which I was lying, having been dragged. But providentially Sir Stafford Northcote, who had been out all night, resolved to make one other trial, and came so near that he heard me crying. He carried me in his arms for nearly a quarter of a mile, when we met my father and Sir Stafford Northcote's servants. I remember, and never shall forget, my Father's face as he looked upon me while I lay in the servant's arms—so calm, and the tears stealing down his face; for I was the child of his old age. My Mother, as you may suppose, was outrageous with joy. Meantime in rushed a young lady, crying out—'I hope you'll whip him, Mrs. Coleridge.' This woman still lives at Ottery; and neither philosophy nor religion has been able to conquer the antipathy which I feel towards her, whenever I see her. I was put to bed, and recovered in a day or so. But I was certainly injured; for I was weakly and subject to ague for many years after.

" My Father—who had so little parental ambition in him,

that, but for my Mother's pride and spirit, he would certainly have brought up his other sons to trades—had nevertheless resolved that I should be a parson. I read every book that came in my way without distinction; and my Father was fond of me, and used to take me on his knee, and hold long conversations with me. I remember, when eight years old, walking with him one winter evening from a farmer's house, a mile from Ottery; and he then told me the names of the stars, and how Jupiter was a thousand times larger than our world, and that the other twinkling stars were suns that had worlds rolling round them; and when I came home, he showed me how they rolled round. I heard him with a profound delight and admiration, but without the least mixture of wonder or incredulity. For from my early reading of fairy tales and about genii, and the like, my mind had been habituated to the Vast; and I never regarded my senses in any way as the *criteria* of my belief. I regulated all my creeds by my conceptions, not by my sight, even at that age. Ought children to be permitted to read romances and stories of giants, magicians, and genii? I know all that has been said against it; but I have formed my faith in the affirmative. I know no other way of giving the mind a love of the Great and the Whole. Those who have been led to the same truths step by step, through the constant testimony of their senses, seem to me to want a sense which I possess. They contemplate nothing but parts, and all parts are necessarily little, and the universe to them is but a mass of little things. It is true, the mind may become credulous and prone to superstition by the former method;—but are not the experimentalists credulous even to madness in believing any absurdity, rather than believe the grandest truths, if they have not the testimony of their own senses in their favour? I have known some who have been rationally educated, as it is styled. They were marked by a microscopic acuteness; but when they looked at great things, all became a blank, and they saw nothing, and denied that anything could be seen, and uniformly put the negative of a power for the possession of a power, and called the want of *imagination* judgment, and the never being moved to rapture philosophy.

"Towards the latter end of September 1781, my Father went to Plymouth with my brother Francis, who was to go out as midshipman under Admiral Graves, who was a friend of my Father's. He settled Frank as he wished, and returned on the 4th of October, 1781. He arrived at Exeter about six o'clock, and was pressed to take a bed there by the friendly family of the Harts; but he refused; and to avoid their entreaties he told them that he had never been superstitious, but that the night before he had had a dream, which had made a deep impression on him. He dreamed that Death had appeared to him, as he is commonly painted, and had touched him with his dart. Well, he returned home; and all his family, I excepted, were up. He told my Mother his dream; but he was in high health and good spirits; and there was a bowl of punch made, and my Father gave a long and particular account of his travel, and that he had placed Frank under a religious Captain, and so forth. At length he went to bed, very well and in high spirits. A short time after he had lain down, he complained of a pain in his bowels, to which he was subject, from wind. My Mother got him some peppermint water, which he took, and after a pause, he said, 'I am much better now, my dear!'—and lay down again. In a minute my Mother heard a noise in his throat, and spoke to him, but he did not answer; and she spoke repeatedly in vain. Her shriek awaked me, and I said—'Papa is dead!' I did not know my Father's return; but I knew that he was expected. How I came to think of his death, I cannot tell; but so it was. Dead he was. Some said it was gout in the heart;—probably it was a fit of apoplexy. He was an Israelite without guile, simple, generous, and, taking some Scripture texts in their literal sense, he was conscientiously indifferent to the good and the evil of this world. God love you and

"S. T. Coleridge!"

He was buried at Ottery on the 10th of October, 1781. 'O! that I might so pass away," said Coleridge, thirty years afterwards, "if, like him, I were an Israelite without guile! The image of my Father, my revered, kind, learned, simple-hearted Father is a religion to me."

At his Father's death Coleridge was nearly nine years old. He continued with his Mother at Ottery till the spring of 1782, when he was sent to London to wait the appointed time for admission into Christ's Hospital, to which a presentation had been procured from Mr. John Way through the influence of his father's old pupil Sir Francis Buller. Ten weeks he lived in London with an Uncle, and was entered in the books on the 8th of July 1782.

V.

*To Mr. Poole.*

"FROM October 1781 to October 1782. After the death of my Father, we, of course, changed houses, and I remained with my Mother till the spring of 1782, and was a day scholar to Parson Warren, my Father's successor. He was not very deep, I believe; and I used to delight my poor Mother by relating little instances of his deficiency in grammar knowledge—every detraction from his merits seeming an oblation to the memory of my Father, especially as Warren did certainly *pulpitize* much better. Somewhere I think about April 1782, Judge Buller, who had been educated by my Father, sent for me, having procured a Christ's Hospital presentation. I accordingly went to London, and was received and entertained by my Mother's brother, Mr. Bowdon. He was generous as the air, and a man of very considerable talents, but he was fond, as others have been, of his bottle. He received me with great affection, and I staid ten weeks at his house, during which I went occasionally to Judge Buller's. My Uncle was very proud of me, and used to carry me from coffee-house to coffee-house, and tavern to tavern, where I drank, and talked, and disputed as if I had been a man. Nothing was more common than for a large party to exclaim in my hearing, that I was a prodigy, and so forth; so that while I remained at my Uncle's, I was most completely spoilt and pampered, both mind and body.

"At length the time came, and I donned the blue coat and yellow stockings, and was sent down to Hertford, a town twenty miles from London, where there are about three hundred of the younger Blue-coat boys. At Hertford I was very

happy on the whole, for I had plenty to eat and drink, and we had pudding and vegetables almost every day. I remained there six weeks, and then was drafted up to the great school in London, where I arrived in September, 1782, and was placed in the second ward, then called Jefferies' Ward, and in the Under Grammar School. There are twelve wards, or dormitories, of unequal sizes, beside the sick ward, in the great school; and they contained altogether seven hundred boys, of whom I think nearly one-third were the sons of clergymen. There are five schools,—mathematical, grammar, drawing, reading, and writing—all very large buildings. When a boy is admitted, if he reads very badly, he is either sent to Hertford, or to the reading school. Boys are admissible from seven to twelve years of age. If he learns to read tolerably well before nine, he is drafted into the Lower Grammar School, if not, into the Writing School, as having given proof of unfitness for classical studies. If, before he is eleven, he climbs up to the first form of the Lower Grammar School, he is drafted into the Head Grammar School. If not, at eleven years of age, he is sent into the Writing School, where he continues till fourteen or fifteen, and is then either apprenticed or articled as a clerk, or whatever else his turn of mind or of fortune shall have provided for him. Two or three times a year the Mathematical Master beats up for recruits for the King's boys, as they are called; and all, who like the navy, are drafted into the Mathematical and Drawing Schools, where they continue till sixteen or seventeen years of age, and go out as midshipmen, and schoolmasters in the Navy. The boys who are drafted into the Head Grammar School, remain there till thirteen; and then, if not chosen for the University, go into the Writing School.

"Each dormitory has a nurse or matron, and there is a head matron to superintend all these nurses. The boys were, when I was admitted, under excessive subordination to each other according to rank in school; and every ward was governed by four Monitors,—appointed by the Steward, who was the supreme governour out of school—our temporal lord,—and by four Markers, who wore silver medals, and were appointed by the Head Grammar Master, who was our supreme spiritual lord. The same boys were commonly both

Monitors and Markers. We read in classes on Sundays to our Markers, and were catechised by them, and under their sole authority during prayers, &c. All other authority was in the Monitors; but, as I said, the same boys were ordinarily both the one and the other. Our diet was very scanty. Every morning a bit of dry bread and some bad small beer. Every evening a larger piece of bread, and cheese or butter, whichever we liked. For dinner,—on Sunday, boiled beef and broth; Monday, bread and butter, and milk and water; Tuesday, roast mutton; Wednesday, bread and butter, and rice milk; Thursday, boiled beef and broth; Friday, boiled mutton and broth; Saturday, bread and butter, and pease-porridge. Our food was portioned; and, excepting on Wednesdays, I never had a belly full. Our appetites were damped, never satisfied; and we had no vegetables."

"S. T. COLERIDGE."

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"O! what a change!" he writes in another note; "depressed, moping, friendless, poor orphan, half starved; at that time the portion of food to the Blue-coats was cruelly insufficient for those who had no friends to supply them." And he afterwards says:—"When I was first plucked up and transplanted from my birth-place and family, at the death of my dear Father, whose revered image has ever survived in my mind to make me know what the emotions and affections of a son are, and how ill a father's place is likely to be supplied by any other relation, Providence, (it has often occurred to me,) gave me the first intimation that it was my lot, and that it was best for me, to make or find my way of life a detached individual, a *terræ filius*, who was to ask love or service of no one on any more specific relation than that of being a man, and as such to take my chance for the free charities of humanity."

Coleridge continued eight years at Christ's Hospital. It was a very curious and important part of his life, giving him Bowyer for his teacher, and Lamb for his friend.[1] Numerous retrospective notices by himself and others exist of this

[1] [See note at the end of the chapter. S. C.]

period; but none of his really boyish letters have been preserved. The exquisite Essay intituled, "Christ's Hospital five and thirty years ago,[3] by Lamb, is principally founded on that delightful writer's recollections of the boy Coleridge, and that boy's own subsequent descriptions of his school days. Coleridge is Lamb's "poor friendless boy."—"My parents and those who should care for me, were far away. Those few acquaintances of theirs, which they could reckon upon being kind to me in the great city, after a little forced notice, which they had the grace to take of me on my first arrival in town, soon grew tired of my holiday visits. They seemed to them to recur too often, though I thought them few enough; and, one after another, they all failed me, and I felt myself alone among six hundred playmates. O the cruelty of separating a poor lad from his early homestead! The yearnings which I used to have toward it in those unfledged years! How, in my dreams would my native town, far in the west, come back with its church, its trees, and faces! How I would wake weeping, and in the anguish of my heart exclaim upon sweet *Calne in Wiltshire!*"

Yet it must not be supposed that Coleridge was an unhappy boy. He was naturally of a joyous temperament, and in one amusement, swimming, he excelled and took singular delight. Indeed he believed, and probably with truth, that his health was seriously injured by his excess in bathing, coupled with such tricks as swimming across the New River in his clothes, and drying them on his back, and the like. But reading was a perpetual feast to him. "From eight to fourteen," he writes, "I was a playless day-dreamer, a *helluo librorum*, my appetite for which was indulged by a singular incident: a stranger, who was struck by my conversation, made me free of a circulating library in King Street, Cheapside."—"Here," he proceeds, "I read through the catalogue, folios and all, whether I understood them, or did not understand them, running all risks in skulking out to get the two volumes which I was entitled to have daily. Conceive what I must have been at

[3] Prose Works II. p. 26.

fourteen; I was in a continual low fever. My whole being was, with eyes closed to every object of present sense, to crumple myself up in a sunny corner, and read, read, read, —fancy myself on Robinson Crusoe's island, finding a mountain of plum-cake, and eating a room for myself, and then eating it into the shapes of tables and chairs—hunger and fancy!"—"My talents and superiority," he continues, "made me for ever at the head in my routine of study, though utterly without the desire to be so; without a spark of ambition; and as to emulation, it had no meaning for me; but the difference between me and my form-fellows, in our lessons and exercises, bore no proportion to the measureless difference between me and them in the wide, wild, wilderness of useless, unarranged book knowledge and book thoughts. Thank Heaven! it was not the age for getting up prodigies; but at twelve or fourteen I should have made as pretty a juvenile prodigy as was ever emasculated and ruined by fond and idle wonderment. Thank Heaven! I was flogged instead of being flattered. However, as I climbed up the school, my lot was somewhat alleviated."

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"*Christ's Hospital gave him Lamb for his friend,*" p. 331.

A few particulars of this "most remarkable and amiable man," the well-known author of Essays by Elia, Rosamund Gray, Poems, and other works, will interest most readers of the Biographia.

He was born on the 18th of February, 1775, in the Inner Temple; died 27th December, 1834, about five months after his friend Coleridge, who continued in habits of intimacy with him from their first acquaintance till his death in July of the same year. In "one of the most exquisite of all the Essays of Elia," *The Old Benchers of the Middle Temple*, (Works, vol. II. p. 188) Lamb has given the characters of his father, and of his father's master, Samuel Salt. The few touches descriptive of this gentleman's "unrelenting bachelorhood"—which appears in the sequel to have been a persistent mourner-hood—and the forty years' hopeless passion of mild Susan P.—which very permanence redeems and almost dignifies, is in the author's sweetest vein of mingled humour and pathos, wherein the latter, as the stronger ingredient, predominates.

Mr. Lamb never married, for, as is recorded in the Memoir, "on the death of his parents, he felt himself called upon by duty to repay to his sister[3] the solicitude with which she had watched over his infancy. To her, from the age of twenty-one, he devoted his existence, seeking thenceforth no connection which could interfere with her supremacy in his affections, or impair his ability to sustain and to comfort her." Mr. Coleridge speaks of Miss Lamb, to whom he continued greatly attached, in these verses, addressed to her brother:

"Cheerily, dear Charles!
Thou thy best friend shalt cherish many a year;
Such warm presages feel I of high hope!
For not uninterested the dear maid
I've viewed—her soul affectionate yet wise,
Her polished wit as mild as lambent glories
That play around a sainted infant's head."

(See the single volume of Coleridge's Poems, p. 28.)

Mr. Lamb has himself described his dear and only sister, whose proper name is Mary Anne, under the title of "Cousin Bridget," in the Essay called Mackery End, a continuation of that entitled *My Relations*, in which he has drawn the portrait of his elder brother. "Bridget Elia," so he commences the former, "has been my housekeeper for many a long year. I have obligations to Bridget, extending beyond the period of memory. We house together, old bachelor and maid, in a sort of double singleness; with such tolerable comfort upon the whole, that I, for one, find in myself no sort of disposition to go out upon the mountains, with the rash king's offspring, to bewail my celibacy."—(Works, vol. II. p. 171.) He describes her intellectual tastes in this essay, but does not refer to her literary abilities. She wrote Mrs. Leicester's School, which Mr. C. used warmly to praise for delicacy of taste and tenderness of feeling.

Miss Lamb still survives, in the words of Mr. Talfourd, "to mourn the severance of a life-long association, as free from every

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[3] "A word
Timidly uttered, for she *lives*, the meek,
The self-restraining, the ever kind."

From Mr. Wordsworth's memorial poem to her brother. P. W. V. p. 333.

alloy of selfishness, as remarkable for moral beauty, as this world ever witnessed in brother and sister." I have felt desirous to place in relief, as far as might be, such an interesting union—to show how blest a fraternal marriage may be, and what sufficient helpmates a brother and sister have been to each other. Marriages of this kind would perhaps be more frequent but for the want of some pledge or solid warranty of continuance equivalent to that which rivets wedlock between husband and wife. Without the vow and the bond, formal or virtual, no society, from the least to the greatest, will hold together. Many persons are so constituted that they cannot feel rest or satisfaction of spirit without a single supreme object of tender affection, in whose heart they are conscious of holding a like supremacy,—who has common hopes, loves, and interests with themselves. Without this the breezes do not refresh nor the sunbeams gladden them. A *share* in ever so many kind hearts does not suffice to their happiness; they must have the whole of one, as no one else has any part of it, whatever love of another kind that heart may still reserve for others. There is no reason why a brother and sister might not be to each other this second-self—this dearer half—though such an attachment is beyond mere fraternal love, and must have something in it "of choice and election," superadded to the natural tie; but it is seldom found to exist, because the durable cement is wanting—the sense of security and permanence, without which the body of affection cannot be consolidated, nor the heart commit itself to its whole capacity of emotion. I believe that many a brother and sister spend their days in uncongenial wedlock, or in a restless faintly expectant-singlehood, who might form a "comfortable couple" could they but make up their minds early to take each other for better for worse.

Two other poems of Mr. C. besides the one in which his sister is mentioned, are addressed to Mr. Lamb—*This Lime-tree-bower my Prison*, and the lines *To a Friend, who had declared his intention of writing no more Poetry*. (Poetical Works, I. p. 201 & p. 205.) In a letter to the author, (Letters, I. p. 150.) Lamb inveighs against the soft epithet applied to him in the first of these. He hoped his "*virtues* had done *sucking*"—and declared such praise fit only to be a "cordial to some green-sick sonnetteer."

Yes! they wander on
In gladness all; but thou, methinks, most glad,
My *gentle-hearted* Charles! for thou hast pined

And hungered after nature, many a year,
In the great city pent, winning thy way
With sad yet patient soul through evil and pain
And strange calamity.

In the next poem he is called "wild-eyed boy." The two epithets, "wild-eyed" and "gentle-hearted," will recall Charles Lamb to the minds of all who knew him personally. Mr Talfourd seems to think that the special delight in the country, ascribed to him by my father, was a distinction scarcely merited. I rather imagine that his indifference to it was a sort of "mock apparel" in which it was his humour at times to invest himself. I have been told that, when visiting the Lakes, he took as much delight in the natural beauties of the region as might be expected from a man of his taste and sensibility.[4]

Mr. Coleridge's expression, recorded in the Table Talk, that he "looked on the degraded men and things around him like moonshine on a dunghill, that shines and takes no pollution," partly alludes to that tolerance of moral evil, both in men and books, which was so much remarked in Charles Lamb, and was, in so good a man, really remarkable. His toleration of it in books is conspicuous in the view he takes of the writings of Congreve and Wycherley, in his essay on the artificial comedy of the last century, (Works, vol. II. p. 822) and in many of his other literary criticisms. His toleration of it in men—at least his faculty of merging some kinds and degrees of it in concomitant good, or even beholding certain errours rather as objects of interest, or of a meditative pity and tenderness, than of pure aversion and condemnation, Mr. Talfourd has feelingly described in his Memoir, (vol. II. p. 326-9) "Not only to opposite opinions," he says, "and devious habits of thought was Lamb indulgent; he discovered the soul of goodness in things evil so vividly, that the surrounding evil disappeared from his mental vision." This characteristic of his mind is not to be identified with the idolizing propensity common to many ardent and imaginative spirits. He "not only loved his friends in spite of their errors," as Mr. Talfourd ob-

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[4] "Thou wert a scorner of the field, my Friend,
But more in show than truth."

From Mr. W.'s poem *To a good man of most dear memory*, quoted in p. 331.

serves, "but loved them, *errors and all;*" which implies that he was not unconscious of their existence. He saw the failings as plainly as any one else, nay, fixed his gentle but discerning eye upon them; whereas the idolizers behold certain objects in a bedarkening blaze of light, or rather of light-confounding brightness, the multiplied and heightened reflection of whatever is best in them, to the obscurity or transmutation of all their defects. Whence it necessarily follows that the world presents itself to their eyes divided, like a chess-board, into black and white compartments—a moral and intellectual chequer-work; not that they love to make darkness, but that they luxuriate too eagerly in light: and their "over-muchness" toward some men involves an over-littleness towards others, whom they involuntarily contrast, in all their poor and peccant reality, with gorgeous idealisms. The larger half of mankind is exiled for them into a hemisphere of shadow, as dim, cold, and negative as the unlit portion of the crescent moon. Lamb's general tendency, though he too could warmly admire, was in a different direction; he was ever introducing streaks and gleams of light into darkness, rather than drowning certain objects in floods of it; and this, I think, proceeded in him from indulgence toward human nature rather than from indifference to evil. To his friend the disposition to exalt and glorify coexisted, in a very remarkable manner, with a power of severe analysis of character and poignant exhibition of it,—a power which few possess without exercising it some time or other to their own sorrow and injury. The consequence to Mr. Coleridge was that he sometimes seemed untrue to himself, when he had but brought forward, one after another, perfectly real and sincere moods of his mind.

In his fine poem commemorating the deaths of several poets, Mr. Wordsworth thus joins my father's name with that of his almost life-long friend:

> Nor has the rolling year twice measured,
> From sign to sign, its steadfast course,
> Since every mortal power of Coleridge
> Was frozen at its marvellous source;
>
> The rapt One of the godlike forehead,
> The heaven-eyed creature sleeps in earth;
> And Lamb, the frolic and the gentle,
> Has vanished from his lonely hearth. S. C.

## CHAPTER II.

### [1791 to 1795.]

'Come back into memory, like as thou wert in the day-spring of thy fancies, with Hope like a fiery column before thee—the dark pillar not yet turned—Samuel Taylor Coleridge—Logician, Metaphysician, Bard!—"

"S. T. COLERIDGE entered at Jesus College, Cambridge, the 5th of February, 1791. He gained Sir William Brown's gold medal for the Greek Ode in the summer of that year. It was on the Slave Trade. The poetic force and originality of this Ode were, as he said himself, much beyond the language in which they were conveyed. In the winter of 1792-3 he stood for the University (Craven) Scholarship with Dr. Keate, the late head-master of Eton, Mr. Bethell (of Yorkshire) and Bishop Butler, who was the successful candidate. In 1793 he wrote without success for the Greek Ode on Astronomy, the prize for which was gained by Dr. Keate. The original is not known to exist, but the reader may see what is probably a very free version of it by Mr. Southey in his Minor Poems. (*Poetical Works*, Vol. II. p. 170.) "Coleridge"—says a schoolfellow of his who followed him to Cambridge in 1792, "was very studious, but his reading was desultory and capricious. He took little exercise merely for the sake of exercise: but he was ready at any time to unbend his mind in conversation; and, for the sake of this, his room, (the ground-floor room on the right hand of the staircase facing the great gate,) was a constant rendezvous of conversation-loving friends. I will not call them loungers, for they did not call to kill time, but to enjoy it. What evenings have I spent in those rooms! What little suppers, or *sizings*, as they were called, have I enjoyed; when Æschylus, and Plato, and Thucydides were pushed aside, with a pile of lexicons and the like, to discuss the pamphlets of the day. Ever and anon a pamphlet issued

from the pen of Burke. There was no need of having the book before us;—Coleridge had read it in the morning, and in the evening he would repeat whole pages *verbatim.*"—*College Reminiscences, Gentleman's Mag.* Dec. 1834.

In May and June, 1793, Frend's trial took place in the Vice-Chancellor's Court, and in the Court of Delegates, at Cambridge. Frend was a Fellow of Jesus, and a slight acquaintance had existed between him and Coleridge, who however soon became his partizan. Mr. C. used to relate a remarkable incident, which is thus preserved by Mr. Gillman:—"The trial was observed by Coleridge to be going against Frend, when some observation or speech was made in his favour;—a dying hope thrown out, as it appeared, to Coleridge, who in the midst of the Senate House, whilst sitting on one of the benches, extended his hands and clapped them. The Proctor in a loud voice demanded who had committed this indecorum. Silence ensued. The Proctor, in an elevated tone, said to a young man sitting near Coleridge, "'Twas you, Sir!" The reply was as prompt as the accusation; for, immediately holding out the stump of his right arm, it appeared that he had lost his hand;—"I would, Sir," said he, "that I had the power!" That no innocent person should incur blame, Coleridge went directly afterwards to the Proctor, who told him that he saw him clap his hands, but fixed on this person, who he knew had not the power. "You have had," said he, "a narrow escape!"—(*Life of S. T. C.* I. p. 55.)

Coleridge passed the summer of 1793 at Ottery, and whilst there wrote his *Songs of the Pixies*, (*Poetical Works*, I. p. 13.) and some other little pieces. He returned to Cambridge in October, but, in the following month, in a moment of despondency and vexation of spirit, occasioned principally by some debts not amounting to 100*l.* he suddenly left his college and went to London. In a few days he was reduced to want, and observing a recruiting advertisement he resolved to get bread and overcome a prejudice at the same time by becoming a soldier. He accordingly applied to the serjeant, and after some delay was marched down to Reading, where he regularly enlisted as a private in the

15th Light Dragoons on the 3d of December, 1793. He kept his initials under the names of Silas Titus Comberbacke. "I sometimes," he writes in a letter, "compare my own life with that of Steele, (yet O! how unlike!)—led to this from having myself also for a brief time borne arms, and written 'private' after my name, or rather another name; for, being at a loss when suddenly asked my name, I answered *Cumberback*, and verily my habits were so little equestrian, that my horse, I doubt not, was of that opinion." Coleridge continued four months a light dragoon, during which time he saw and suffered much. He rode his horse ill, and groomed him worse; but he made amends by nursing the sick, and writing letters for the sound. His education was detected by one of his officers, Captain Nathaniel Ogle, who observed the words,—*Eheu! quam infortunii miserrimum est fuisse felicem!*—freshly written in pencil on the stable-wall or door, and ascertained that Comberbacke was the writer. But the termination of his military career was brought about by a chance recognition in the street: his family was apprized of his situation, and after some difficulty he was duly discharged on the 10th of April, 1794, at Hounslow.

Coleridge now returned to Cambridge, and remained there till the commencement of the summer vacation. But the adventures of the preceding six months had broken the continuity of his academic life, and given birth to new views of future exertion. His acquaintance with Frend had materially contributed to his adoption of the system called Unitarianism, which he now openly professed, and this alone made it imperative on his conscience to decline availing himself of any advantages dependent on his entering into holy orders, or subscribing the Articles of the English Church. He lived, nevertheless, to see and renounce his error, and to leave on record his deep and solemn faith in the catholic doctrine of Trinal Unity, and the Redemption of man through the sacrifice of Christ, both God and Man. Indeed his Unitarianism, such as it was, was not of the ordinary quality. "I can truly say"—were Coleridge's words in after life—"that I never falsified the Scripture.

I always told the Unitarians that their interpretations of the Scripture were intolerable upon any principles of sound criticism; and that if they were to offer to construe the will of a neighbour as they did that of their Maker, they would be scouted out of society. I said then plainly and openly that it was clear enough that John and Paul were not Unitarians. But at that time I had a strong sense of the repugnancy of the doctrine of vicarious atonement to the moral being, and I thought nothing could counterbalance that. 'What care I,' I said, 'for the Platonisms of John, or the Rabbinisms of Paul?—My conscience revolts!' That was the ground of my Unitarianism." (*Table Talk*, p. 305, 2d edition.)

At the commencement of the Long Vacation, in June, 1794, Coleridge went to Oxford on a visit to an old schoolfellow, intending probably to proceed afterwards to his mother at Ottery. But an accidental introduction to Robert Southey, then an under-graduate at Balliol College, first delayed, and ultimately prevented, the completion of this design, and became, in its consequences, the hinge on which a large part of Coleridge's after life was destined to turn. Upon the present occasion, however, he left Oxford with an acquaintance, Mr. Hucks, for a pedestrian tour in Wales.* Two other friends, Brookes and Berdmore, joined them in the course of their ramble; and at Caernarvon Mr. Coleridge wrote the following letter to Mr. Masters, of Jesus College.

"DEAR MASTERS, *July 22d*, 1794.

"FROM Oxford to Gloucester,* to Ross,* to Hereford, to Leominster, to Bishop's Castle,* to Montgomery, to Welshpool, Llanvelling,* Llangunnog, Bala,* Druid

* It is to this tour that he refers in the Table Talk, p. 83.—"I took the thought of *grinning for joy* in that poem, (The Ancient Mariner,) from my companion (Berdmore's) remark to me, when we had climbed to the top of Penmaenmaur, and were nearly dead with thirst. We could not speak from the constriction, till we found a little puddle under a stone. He said to me,—"You grinned like an idiot." He had done the same."

House,* Llangollin, Wrexham,** Ruthin, Denbigh,* St. Asaph, Holywell,* Rudland, Abergeley,* Aberconway,* Abber,* over a ferry to Beaumaris* (Anglesea), Amlock,* Copper Mines, Gwindu, Moeldon, over a ferry to Caernarvon, have I journeyed, now philosophizing with hacks, now melancholizing by myself, or else indulging those day-dreams of fancy, that make realities more gloomy. To whatever place I have affixed the mark *, there we slept. The first part of our tour was intensely hot—the roads, white and dazzling, seemed to undulate with heat—and the country, bare and unhedged, presented nothing but stone fences, dreary to the eye and scorching to the touch. At Ross we took up our quarters at the King's Arms, once the house of Mr. Kyle, the celebrated Man of Ross. I gave the window-shutter a few verses, which I shall add to the end of the letter. The walk from Llangunnog to Bala over the mountains was most wild and romantic; there are immense and rugged clefts in the mountains, which in winter must form cataracts most tremendous; now there is just enough sun-glittering water dashed down over them to soothe, not disturb the ear. I climbed up a precipice on which was a large thorn-tree, and slept by the side of one of them near two hours.

At Bala I was apprehensive that I had caught the itch from a Welsh democrat, who was charmed with my sentiments; he bruised my hand with a grasp of ardour, and I trembled lest some discontented citizens of the *animalcular* republic might have emigrated. Shortly after, in came a clergyman well dressed, and with him four other gentlemen. I was asked for a public character; I gave Dr. Priestley. The clergyman whispered his neighbour, who it seems is the apothecary of the parish—"Republicans!" Accordingly when the doctor, as they call apothecaries, was to have given a name, "I gives a sentiment, gemmen! May all republicans be *gull*oteened!" Up starts the democrat; "May all fools be gulloteened, and then you will be the first!" Fool, rogue, traitor, liar, &c. flew in each other's faces in hailstorms of vociferation. This is nothing in Wales—they make it necessary vent-holes for the sulphure-

ous fumes of their temper! I endeavoured to calm the tempest by observing that however different our political opinions might be, the appearance of a clergyman assured me that we were all Christians, though I found it rather difficult to reconcile the last sentiment with the spirit of Christianity! "Pho!" quoth the clergyman; "Christianity! Why we a'nt at *church* now, are we? The gentleman's sentiment was a very good one, because it shows him to be sincere in his principles." Welsh politics, however, could not prevail over Welsh hospitality; they all shook hands with me, (except the parson,) and said I was an open-speaking, honest-hearted fellow, though I was a bit of a democrat.

"On our road from Bala to Druid House, we met Brookes and Berdmore. Our rival pedestrians, a *Gemini* of Powells, were vigorously marching onward, in a post-chaise! Berdmore had been ill. We were not a little glad to see each other. Llangollen is a village most romantically situated; but the weather was so intensely hot that we saw only what was to be admired—we could not admire.

"At Wrexham the tower is most magnificent; and in the church is a white marble monument of Lady Middleton, superior, *mea quidem sententia*, to any thing in Westminster Abbey. It had entirely escaped my memory, that Wrexham was the residence of a Miss E. Evans, a young lady with whom in happier days I had been in habits of fraternal correspondence; she lives with her grandmother. As I was standing at the window of the inn, she passed by, and with her, to my utter astonishment, her sister, Mary Evans, *quam afflictim et perdite amabam*,—yea, even to anguish. They both started, and gave a short cry, almost a faint shriek; I sickened, and well nigh fainted, but instantly retired. Had I appeared to recognise her, my fortitude would not have supported me:—

*Vivit, sed mihi non vivit—nova forte marita.*
*Ah, dolor! alterius nunc a cervice pependit.*
*Vos, malefida valete accensæ insomnia mentis,*
*Littora amata valete; vale ah! formosa Maria.*

Hucks informed me that the two sisters walked by the window four or five times, as if anxiously. Doubtless they think themselves deceived by some face strikingly like me. God bless her! Her image is in the sanctuary of my bosom, and never can it be torn from thence, but by the strings that grapple my heart to life! This circumstance made me quite ill. I had been wandering among the wild-wood scenery and terrible graces of the Welsh mountains to wear away, not to revive, the images of the past;—but love is a local anguish; I am fifty miles distant, and am not half so miserable.

"At Denbigh is the finest ruined castle in the kingdom; it surpassed everything I could have conceived. I wandered there two hours in a still evening, feeding upon melancholy. Two well dressed young men were roaming there. "I will play my flute here," said the first; "it will have a romantic effect." "Bless thee, man of genius and sensibility," I silently exclaimed. He sate down amid the most awful part of the ruins; the moon just began to make her rays predominant over the lingering daylight; I pre-attuned my feelings to emotion;—and the romantic youth instantly struck up the sadly pleasing tunes of *Miss Carey—The British Lion is my sign—A roaring trade I drive on*, &c.

"Three miles from Denbigh, on the road to St. Asaph, is a fine bridge with one arch of great, great grandeur. Stand at a little distance, and through it you see the woods waving on the hill-bank of the river in a most lovely point of view. A *beautiful* prospect is always more picturesque when seen at some little distance through an arch. I have frequently thought of Michael Taylor's way of viewing a landscape between his thighs. Under the arch was the most perfect echo I ever heard. Hucks sang *Sweet Echo* with great effect.

At Holywell I bathed in the famous St. Winifred's Well. It is an excellent cold bath. At Rudland is a fine ruined castle. Abergeley is a large village on the sea-coast. Walking on the sea sands I was surprised to see a number of fine women bathing promiscuously with men and boys perfectly naked. Doubtless the citadels of their chastity

are so impregnably strong, that they need not the ornamental bulwarks of modesty; but, seriously speaking, where sexual distinctions are least observed, men and women live together in the greatest purity. Concealment sets the imagination a-working, and as it were *cantharadizes* our desires.

"Just before I quitted Cambridge, I met a countryman with a strange walking-stick, five feet in length. I eagerly bought it, and a most faithful servant it has proved to me. My sudden affection for it has mellowed into settled friendship. On the morning of our leaving Abergeley, just before our final departure, I looked for my stick in the place in which I had left it over night. It was gone. I alarmed the house; no one knew any thing of it. In the flurry of anxiety I sent for the Crier of the town, and gave him the following to cry about the town and the beach, which he did with a gravity for which I am indebted to his stupidity.

"'Missing from the Bee Inn, Abergeley, a curious walking-stick. On one side it displays the head of an eagle, the eyes of which represent rising suns, and the ears Turkish crescents; on the other side is the portrait of the owner in wood-work. Beneath the head of the eagle is a Welsh wig, and around the neck of the stick is a Queen Elizabeth's ruff in tin. All down it waves the line of beauty in very ugly carving. If any gentleman (or lady) has fallen in love with the above described stick, and secretly carried off the same, he (or she) is hereby earnestly admonished to conquer a passion, the continuance of which must prove fatal to his (or her) honesty. And if the said stick has slipped into such gentleman's (or lady's) hand through inadvertence, he (or she) is required to rectify the mistake with all convenient speed. God save the king.'

"Abergeley is a fashionable Welsh watering place, and so singular a proclamation excited no small crowd on the beach, among the rest a lame old gentleman, in whose hands was descried my dear stick. The old gentleman, who lodged at our inn, felt great confusion, and walked homewards, the solemn Crier before him, and a various cavalcade behind him. I kept the muscles of my face in tolerable subjection. He made his lameness an apology for

borrowing my stick, supposed he should have returned before I had wanted it, &c. &c. Thus it ended, except that a very handsome young lady put her head out of a coach-window, and begged my permission to have the bill which I had delivered to the Crier. I acceded to the request with a compliment, that lighted up a blush on her cheek, and a smile on her lip.

"We passed over a ferry to Aberconway. We had scarcely left the boat ere we descried Brookes and Berdmore, with whom we have joined parties, nor do we mean to separate. Our tour through Anglesea to Caernarvon has been repaid by scarcely one object worth seeing. To-morrow we visit Snowdon. Brookes, Berdmore, and myself, at the imminent hazard of our lives, scaled the very summit of Penmaenmaur. It was a most dreadful expedition. I will give you the account in some future letter.

"I sent for Bowles's Works while at Oxford. How was I shocked! Every omission and every alteration disgusted taste, and mangled sensibility. Surely some Oxford toad had been squatting at the poet's ear, and spitting into it the cold venom of dulness. It is not Bowles; he is still the same, (the added poems will prove it) descriptive, dignified, tender, sublime. The sonnets added are exquisite. Abba Thule has marked beauties, and the little poem at Southampton is a diamond; in whatever light you place it, it reflects beauty and splendour. The 'Shakespeare' is sadly unequal to the rest. Yet in whose poems, except those of Bowles, would it not have been excellent? Direct to me, to be left at the Post Office, Bristol, and tell me everything about yourself, how you have spent the vacation, &c.

"Believe me, with gratitude and fraternal friendship,

Your obliged

"S. T. COLERIDGE."

On his return from this excursion Coleridge went, by appointment, to Bristol for the purpose of meeting Southey, whose person and conversation had excited in him the most lively admiration. This was at the end of August or beginning of September. Southey, whose mother then lived at Bath, came over to Bristol accordingly to receive his new

friend, who had left as deep an impression on him, and in that city introduced Coleridge to Robert Lovell, a young Quaker, then recently married to Mary Fricker, and residing in the Old Market. After a short stay at Bristol, where he first saw Sarah Fricker, Mrs. Lovell's elder sister, Coleridge accompanied Southey on his return to Bath. There he remained for some weeks, principally engaged in making love, and in maturing, with his friend, the plan, which he had for some time cherished, of a social community to be established in America upon what he termed a pantisocratical basis. The following letter written at this time by Coleridge to Mr. Charles Heath, of Monmouth, is a curious evidence of his earnestness upon this subject :—

"SIR,

"YOUR brother has introduced my name to you; I shall therefore offer no apology for this letter. A small but liberalized party have formed a scheme of emigration on the principles of an abolition of individual property. Of their political creed, and the arguments by which they support and elucidate it they are preparing a few copies—not as meaning to publish them, but for private distribution. In this work they will have endeavoured to prove the exclusive justice of the system and its practicability; nor will they have omitted to sketch out the code of contracts necessary for the internal regulation of the Society; all of which will of course be submitted to the improvements and approbation of each component member. As soon as the work is printed, one or more copies shall be transmitted to you. Of the characters of the individuals who compose the party I find it embarrassing to speak; yet, vanity apart, I may assert with truth that they have each a sufficient strength of head to make the virtues of the heart respectable, and that they are all highly charged with that enthusiasm which results from strong perceptions of moral rectitude, called into life and action by ardent feelings. With regard to pecuniary matters it is found necessary, if twelve men with their families emigrate on this system, that £2,000 should be the aggregate of their contributions—but infer not from hence

that each man's *quota* is to be settled with the littleness of arithmetical accuracy. No; all will strain every nerve; and then, I trust, the surplus money of some will supply the deficiencies of others. The *minutiæ* of topographical information we are daily endeavouring to acquire; at present our plan is, to settle at a distance, but at a convenient distance, from Cooper's Town on the banks of the Susquehanna. This, however, will be the object of future investigation. For the time of emigration we have fixed on next March. In the course of the winter those of us whose bodies, from habits of sedentary study or academic indolence, have not acquired their full tone and strength, intend to learn the theory and practice of agriculture and carpentry, according as situation and circumstances make one or the other convenient. Your fellow Citizen,

"S. T. COLERIDGE."

The members of the society at that time were Coleridge himself, Southey, Lovell, and George Burnet, a Somersetshire youth and fellow collegian with Southey. Toward the beginning of September, Coleridge left Bath and went, for the last time, as a student, to Cambridge, apparently with the view of taking his degree of B.A. after the ensuing Christmas. Here he published *The Fall of Robespierre* (Lit. Remains. I. p. 1.) of which the first act was written by himself, and the second and third by Mr. Southey, and the particulars of the origin and authorship of which may be found stated in an extract from a letter of Mr. Southey's there printed. The dedication to Mr. Martin is dated at Jesus College, 22nd of September, 1794.

In January, 1795, he was to return—and then with Spring breezes to repair to the banks of the Susquehanna! But his fate withstood;—he took no degree, nor ever crossed the Atlantic. Michaelmas Term 1794 was the last he kept at Cambridge; the vacation following was passed in London with Charles Lamb, and in the beginning of 1795 he returned with Southey to Bristol, and there commenced man.

The whole spring and summer of this year he devoted to public Lectures at Bristol, making in the intervals several

excursions in Somersetshire, one memorial of which remains in the *Lines composed while climbing Brockley Combe* (Poet. Works. I. p. 70.) It was in one of these excursions that Mr. Coleridge and Mr. Wordsworth first met at the house of Mr. Pinney. The first six of those Lectures constituted a course presenting a comparative view of the Civil War under Charles I. and the French Revolution. Three of them, or probably the substance of four or five, were published at Bristol in the latter end of 1795, the first two together, with the title of *Conciones ad Populum*, and the third with that of *The Plot discovered.* The eloquent passage in conclusion of the first of these Addresses was written by Mr. Southey. The tone throughout them all is vehemently hostile to the policy of the great minister of that day; but it is equally opposed to the spirit and maxims of Jacobinism. It was late in life that, after a reperusal of these *Conciones*, Coleridge wrote on a blank page of one of them the following words:—'Except the two or three pages involving the doctrine of philosophical necessity and Unitarianism, I see little or nothing in these outbursts of my youthful zeal to retract; and with the exception of some flame-coloured epithets applied to persons, as to Mr. Pitt and others, or rather to personifications—(for such they really were to me)—as little to regret.'

Another course of six Lectures followed, 'On Revealed Religion, its corruptions, and its political views.' The Prospectus states—'that these Lectures are intended for two classes of men, Christians and Infidels;—the former, that they may be able to *give a reason for the hope that is in them;*—the latter, that they may not determine against Christianity from arguments applicable to its corruptions only.' Nothing remains of these Addresses, nor of two detached Lectures on the Slave Trade and the Hair Powder Tax, which were delivered in the interval between the two principal courses. They were all very popular amongst the opponents of the Government; and those on religion in particular were highly applauded by his Unitarian auditors, amongst whom Dr. and Mrs. Estlin and Mr. Hort were always remembered by Coleridge with regard and esteem.

The Transatlantic scheme, though still a favourite subject of conversation, was now in effect abandoned by these young Pantisocrats. Mr. C. was married at St. Mary Redcliff church to Sarah Fricker on the 4th of October 1795, and went to reside in a cottage at Clevedon on the Bristol Channel; and six weeks afterwards Mr. Southey was also married to Edith Fricker, and left Bristol on the same day on his route to Portugal. At Clevedon Mr. and Mrs. Coleridge resided with one of Mrs. C.'s unmarried sisters and Burnet until the beginning of December.

## CHAPTER III.

[1795 to 1796.]

"Ah! quiet dell! dear cot, and mount sublime!
I was constrained to quit you. Was it right,
While my unnumbered brethren toiled and bled,
That I should dream away th' entrusted hours
On rose-leaf beds pampering the coward heart
With feelings all too delicate for use?
* * * * * * *

I therefore go, and join head, heart and hand,
Active and firm, to fight the bloodless fight
Of science, freedom, and the truth in Christ."

COLERIDGE had, in the course of the summer of 1795, become acquainted with that excellent and remarkable man, the late Thomas Poole of Nether Stowey, Somerset. In a letter written to him on the 7th of October, C. speaks of the prospect from his cottage, and of his future plans in the following way:—

"MY DEAR SIR,

"GOD bless you—or rather God be praised for that he has blessed you! On Sunday morning I was married at St. Mary's, Redcliff—from Chatterton's church. The thought

gave a tinge of melancholy to the solemn joy which I felt, united to the woman, whom I love best of all created beings. We are settled, nay, quite domesticated, at Clevedon,—our comfortable cot! * * * The prospect around is perhaps more various than any in the kingdom: mine eye gluttonizes. The sea, the distant islands, the opposite coast!—I shall assuredly write rhymes, let the nine Muses prevent it if they can. * * * I have given up all thoughts of the Magazine for various reasons. It is a thing of monthly anxiety and quotidian bustle. To publish a Magazine for one year would be nonsense, and, if I pursue what I mean to pursue, my school-plan, I could not publish it for more than one year. In the course of half a year I mean to return to Cambridge—having previously taken my name off from the University's control—and, hiring lodgings there for myself and wife, finish my great work of *Imitations* in two volumes. My former works may, I hope, prove somewhat of genius and of erudition; this will be better; it will show great industry and manly consistency. At the end of it I shall publish proposals for a School * * * My next letter will be long and full of something;—this is inanity and egotism. * * Believe me, dear Poole, your affectionate and mindful—friend, shall I so soon have to say? Believe me my heart prompts it.

"S. T. COLERIDGE!"

The monthly anxiety of a Magazine justly alarmed Coleridge on the 7th of October; yet in the December following he courageously engaged to conduct a weekly political Miscellany. This was *The Watchman*, of which the following Prospectus was in that month printed and circulated.

"To supply at once the places of a Review, Newspaper, and Annual Register.

"On Tuesday, the 1st of March, 1796, will be published No. I. price fourpence, of a Miscellany, to be continued every eighth day, under the name of *The Watchman*, by Samuel Taylor Coleridge. This Miscellany will be comprised in two sheets, or thirty-two pages, closely printed in 8vo; the type, long primer. Its contents, 1:—A history

of the domestic and foreign policy of the preceding days. 2:—The speeches in both Houses of Parliament; and, during the recess, select parliamentary speeches from the commencement of the reign of Charles I. to the present æra, with notes historical and biographical. 3:—Original essays and poetry. 4:—Review of interesting and important publications. Its advantages. 1. There being no advertisements, a greater quantity of original matter will be given, and the speeches in Parliament will be less abridged. 2. From its form it may be bound up at the end of a year, and become an Annual Register. 3. This last circumstance may induce men of letters to prefer this Miscellany to more perishable publications as the vehicle of their effusions. 4. Whenever the Ministerial and Opposition prints differ in their accounts of occurrences, &c. such difference will always be faithfully stated."

Mr. C. went to Bristol in the beginning of December for the purpose of arranging the preliminaries of this undertaking, and at the close of the month he set off upon the tour mentioned in Chap. X. of this Work to collect subscribers. It will be remembered that he was at this time a professed Unitarian; and the project of becoming a minister of that persuasion seems to have passed through his head. He had previously preached, for the first time, two sermons at Mr. Jardine's Chapel in Bath, the subjects being the Corn Laws and the Hair Powder Tax. He appeared in the pulpit in a blue coat and white waistcoat, and, according to Mr. Cottle's testimony, who was present, Coleridge delivered himself languidly, and disappointed every one. But there is no doubt that he subsequently preached upon many occasions with very remarkable effect. The following extracts are from letters written by Mr. C. in the month of January, 1796, during his tour to his early and lasting friend Mr. Josiah Wade of Bristol, and may serve as a commentary on parts of the accounts given of the same tour in this work.

"MY DEAR WADE, Worcester, January, 1796.

"WE were five in number, and twenty-five in quantity. The moment I entered the coach, I stumbled on a huge

projection, which might be called a belly with the same propriety that you might name Mount Atlas a mole-hill. Heavens! that a man should be unconscionable enough to enter a stage coach, who would want elbow room if he were walking on Salisbury Plain.

"The said citizen was a most violent aristocrat, but a pleasant humorous fellow in other respects, and remarkably well informed in agricultural science; so that the time passed pleasantly enough. We arrived at Worcester at half-past two: I, of course, dined at the inn, where I met Mr. Stevens. After dinner I christianized myself, that is, washed and changed, and marched in finery and clean linen to High Street. With regard to business, there is no chance of doing anything at Worcester. The aristocrats are so numerous, and the influence of the clergy so extensive, that Mr. Barr thinks no bookseller will venture to publish *The Watchman.* * * *

"S. T. COLERIDGE."

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"Birmingham, January, 1796.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,

* * * "My exertions here have been incessant, for in whatever company I go, I am obliged to be the figurante of the circle. Yesterday I preached twice, and, indeed, performed the whole service, morning and afternoon. There were about 1,400 persons present, and my sermons, (great part extempore,) were preciously peppered with politics. I have here at least double the number of subscribers I had expected." * * *

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"Nottingham, January, 1796.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,

"You will perceive by this letter I have changed my route. From Birmingham on Friday last, (four o'clock in the morning,) I proceeded to Derby, stayed there till Monday morning, and am now at Nottingham. From Nottingham I go to Sheffield; from Sheffield to Manchester; from Manchester to Liverpool; from Liverpool to London; from London to Bristol. Ah, what a weary way! My poor

crazy ark has been tossed to and fro on an ocean of business, and I long for the Mount Ararat on which it is to rest. At Birmingham I was extremely unwell; a violent cold in my head and limbs confined me for two days. Business succeeded very well;—about a hundred subscribers I think.

"At Derby, also, I succeeded tolerably well. Mr. (Joseph) Strutt, the successor of Sir Richard Arkwright, tells me I may count on forty or fifty in Derby. Derby is full of curiosities;—the cotton and silk mills; Wright the painter, and Dr. Darwin, the every thing but Christian. Dr. Darwin possesses, perhaps, a greater range of knowledge than any other man in Europe, and is the most inventive of philosophical men. He thinks in a new train on all subjects but religion. He bantered me on the subject of religion. I heard all his arguments, and told him it was infinitely consoling to me, to find that the arguments of so great a man, adduced against the existence of a God, and the evidences of revealed religion, were such as had startled me at fifteen, but had become the objects of my smile at twenty. Not one new objection—not even an ingenious one! He boasted 'that he had never read one book in favour of such stuff, but that he had read all the works of Infidels!'

"What would you think, Mr. Wade, of a man who, having abused and ridiculed you, should openly declare that he had heard all that your enemies had to say against you, but had scorned to inquire the truth from any one of your friends? Would you think him an honest man? I am sure you would not. Yet such are all the Infidels whom I have known. They talk of a subject, yet are found to confess themselves profoundly ignorant of it. Dr. Darwin would have been ashamed to reject Hutton's theory of the Earth without having minutely examined it;—yet what is it to us, how the earth was made, a thing impossible to be known? This system the Doctor did not reject without having severely studied it; but all at once he makes up his mind on such important subjects, as whether we be the outcasts of a blind idiot called Nature, or the children of an all wise and infinitely good God!—whether we spend a few

miserable years on this earth, and then sink into a clod of the valley; or endure the anxiety of mortal life, only to fit us for the enjoyment of immortal happiness! These subjects are unworthy a philosopher's investigation! He deems that there is a certain self-evidence in Infidelity, and becomes an Atheist by intuition. Well did St. Paul say, *ye have an evil heart of unbelief.*

* * * "What lovely children Mr. Barr of Worcester has! After church, in the evening, they sat round and sang hymns so sweetly that they overpowered me. It was with great difficulty that I abstained from weeping aloud; and the infant in Mrs. B.'s arms leaned forward, and stretched his little arms, and stared, and smiled. It seemed a picture of heaven, where the different orders of the blessed join different voices in one melodious hallelujah; and the babe looked like a young spirit just that moment arrived in heaven, startled at the seraphic songs, and seized at once with wonder and rapture. * * *

"From your affectionate friend,

"S. T. COLERIDGE."

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"Sheffield, January, 1796.

"MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

"I ARRIVED at this place late last night by the mail from Nottingham, where I have been treated with kindness and friendship, of which I can give you but a faint idea. I preached a charity sermon there last Sunday. I preached in coloured clothes. With regard to the gown at Birmingham, (of which you inquire), I suffered myself to be overpersuaded. First of all, my sermon being of so political a tendency, had I worn my blue coat, it would have impugned Edwards. They would have said, he had stuck a political lecturer in his pulpit. Secondly, the society is of all sorts,—Socinians, Arians, Trinitarians, &c. and I must have shocked a multitude of prejudices. And thirdly, there is a difference between an inn and a place of residence. In the first, your example is of little consequence; in a single instance only, it ceases to operate as example; and my refusal would

have been imputed to affectation, or an unaccommodating spirit. Assuredly I would not do it where I intended to preach often. And even in the vestry at Birmingham, when they at last persuaded me, I told them I was acting against my better knowledge, and should possibly feel uneasy afterwards. So these accounts of the matter you must consider as reasons and palliations, concluding, "I plead guilty, my Lord!" Indeed I want firmness; I perceive I do. I have that within me which makes it difficult to say, No, repeatedly to a number of persons who seem uneasy and anxious. * * *

"My kind remembrances to Mrs. Wade. God bless her and you, and, (like a bad shilling slipped in between two guineas,) your faithful and affectionate friend,

"S. T. COLERIDGE."

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"MY DEAR FRIEND, Manchester, January, 1796.

"I ARRIVED at Manchester last night from Sheffield, to which place I shall only send about thirty numbers. I might have succeeded there, at least equally well with the former towns, but I should injure the sale of the Iris, the editor of which, (a very amiable and ingenious young man of the name of James Montgomery), is now in prison for a libel on a bloody-minded magistrate there. Of course I declined publicly advertising or disposing of *The Watchman* in that town.

"This morning I called on Mr. ——— with H.'s letter. Mr. ——— received me as a rider, and treated me with insolence that was really amusing from its novelty. 'Overstocked with these articles.'———'People always setting up some new thing or other.'———'I read the Star and another paper: what could I want with this paper, which is nothing more?'———'Well, well, I'll consider of it.' To these entertaining *bons mots* I returned the following repartee—'Good morning, Sir.' * * *

"God bless you, S. T. C."

Mr. C. went to Liverpool and was as successful there as elsewhere generally in procuring subscribers to *The Watch-*

*man.* The late Dr. Crompton found him out, and became his friend and patron. His exertions, however, at Liverpool were suddenly stopped by news of the critical state of Mrs. C.'s health, and a pressing request that he would immediately return to Bristol, whither Mrs. C. had now gone from Clevedon. Coleridge accordingly gave up his plan of visiting London, and left Liverpool on his homeward trip. From Lichfield he wrote to Mr. Wade the following letter:—

"MY DEAR FRIEND, Lichfield, January, 1786.

* * * I have succeeded very well here at Lichfield. Belcher, bookseller, Birmingham; Sutton, Nottingham; Pritchard, Derby; and Thomson, Manchester; are the publishers. In every number of The Watchman there will be printed these words, "Published in Bristol by the Author, S. T. Coleridge, and sold, &c."

"I verily believe no poor fellow's idea-pot ever bubbled up so vehemently with fears, doubts, and difficulties, as mine does at present. Heaven grant it may not boil over, and put out the fire? I am almost heartless. My past life seems to me like a dream, a feverish dream—all one gloomy huddle of strange actions and dim-discovered motives;—friendships lost by indolence, and happiness murdered by mismanaged sensibility. The present hour I seem in a quick-set hedge of embarrassments. For shame! I ought not to mistrust God; but, indeed, to hope is far more difficult than to fear. Bulls have horns, lions have talons:—

"The fox and statesman subtle wiles ensure,
The cit and polecat stink and are secure;
Toads with their venom, doctors with their drug,
The priest and hedgehog in their robes are snug.
Oh, Nature! cruel step-mother and hard
To thy poor naked, fenceless child, the bard!
No horns but those by luckless Hymen worn,
And those, alas! not Amalthæa's horn!
With aching feelings, and with aching pride,
He bears the unbroken blast on every side;
Vampire booksellers drain him to the heart,
And scorpion critics cureless venom dart." S. T. C.

Coleridge on his return to Bristol resided for a short time on Redcliff Hill, in a house occupied by Mrs. C.'s mother. He had procured upwards of a thousand subscribers' names to *The Watchman*, and had certainly some ground for confidence in his future success. His tour had been a triumph; and the impression made by his personal demeanour and extraordinary eloquence was unprecedented, and such as was never effaced from the recollection of those who met with him at this period. He seems to have employed the interval between his arrival in Bristol and the 1st of March —the day fixed for the appearance of *The Watchman*—in preparing for that work, and also in getting ready the materials of his first volume of poems, the copyright of which was purchased by Mr. Cottle for thirty guineas. Coleridge was a student all his life; he was very rarely indeed, idle in the common sense of the term; but he was constitutionally indolent, averse from continuous exertion externally directed, and consequently the victim of a procrastinating habit, the occasion of innumerable distresses to himself and of endless solicitude to his friends, and which materially impaired, though it could not destroy, the operation and influence of his wonderful abilities. Hence, also, the fits of deep melancholy which from time to time seized his whole soul, during which he seemed an imprisoned man without hope of liberty. In February, 1796, whilst his volume was in the press, he wrote the following letter to Mr. Cottle:—

"MY DEAR COTTLE,

"I HAVE this night and to-morrow for you, being alone, and my spirits calm. I shall consult my poetic honour, and of course your interest, more by staying at home than by drinking tea with you. I should be happy to see my poems out even by next week, and I shall continue in stirrups, that is, shall not dismount my Pegasus, till Monday morning, at which time you will have to thank God for having done with your affectionate friend always, but author evanescent,

"S. T. C."

Shortly afterwards, mistaking the object of a message from Mr. Cottle for an application for *copy* for the press,

Coleridge wrote the following letter with reference to the painful subject:—

"MY DEAR SIR, Redcliff Hill, February 22, 1796.

"IT is my duty and business to thank God for all his dispensations, and to believe them the best possible; but, indeed, I think I should have been more thankful, if He had made me a journeyman shoemaker, instead of an author by trade. I have left my friends; I have left plenty; I have left that ease which would have secured a literary immortality, and have enabled me to give to the public works conceived in moments of inspiration, and polished with leisurely solicitude; and, alas! for what have I left them? For — who deserted me in the hour of distress, and for a scheme of virtue impracticable and romantic! So I am forced to write for bread—write the flights of poetic enthusiasm, when every minute I am hearing a groan from my wife! Groans, and complaints, and sickness! The present hour I am in a quick-set hedge of embarrassment, and, whichever way I turn, a thorn runs into me. The future is cloud and thick darkness. Poverty, perhaps, and the thin faces of them that want bread looking up to me! Nor is this all. My happiest moments for composition are broken in upon by the reflection that I must make haste. 'I am too late.' 'I am already months behind.' 'I have received my pay beforehand.'———O wayward and desultory spirit of Genius, ill can'st thou brook a taskmaster! The tenderest touch from the hand of obligation wounds thee like a scourge of scorpions!

"I have been composing in the fields this morning, and came home to write down the first side of my Preface, when I heard that your man had brought a note from you. I have not seen it, but I guess its contents. I am writing as fast as I can. Depend on it, you shall not be out of pocket for me. I feel what I owe you, and, independently of this, I love you as a friend,—indeed so much that I regret, seriously regret, that you have been my copyholder.

"If I have written petulantly, forgive me. God knows I am sore all over. God bless you! and believe me that,

setting gratitude aside, I love and esteem you, and have your interest at heart full as much as my own.

"S. T. COLERIDGE."

On the 1st of March, 1796, *The Watchman* was published; it ended with the tenth number on the 13th of May following. Further remarks concerning that Work will be found in the notes to the tenth chapter of this volume.[1] In March Mr. C. removed to a house in Oxford Street in Kingsdown, and thence wrote the following letter to Mr. Poole:—

"MY DEAR POOLE, 30th March, 1796.

"FOR the neglect in the transmission of *The Watchman*, you must blame George Burnet, who undertook the business. I however will myself see it sent this week with the preceding Numbers. I am greatly obliged to you for your communication—(on the Slave Trade in No. V.);—it appears in this Number. I am anxious to receive more from you, and likewise to know what you dislike in The Watchman, and what you like, but particularly the former. You have not given me your opinion of The Plot Discovered.

"Since you last saw me, I have been well nigh distracted. The repeated and most injurious blunders of my printer out of doors, and Mrs. Coleridge's danger at home—added to the gloomy prospect of so many mouths to open and shut, like puppets, as I move the string in the eating and drinking way;—but why complain to you? Misery is an article with which every market is so glutted that it can answer no one's purpose to export it.

"I have received many abusive letters, post-paid, thanks to the friendly malignants! But I am perfectly callous to disapprobation, except when it tends to lessen profit. Then indeed I am all one tremble of sensibility, marriage having taught me the wonderful uses of that vulgar commodity, yclept Bread. *The Watchman* succeeds so as to yield a *bread-and-cheesish* profit. Mrs. Coleridge is recovering

[1] These notes I never found. Probably they were but designed. S. C.

apace, and deeply regrets that she was deprived of the pleasure of seeing you. We are in our new house, where there is a bed at your service whenever you will please to delight us with a visit. Surely in Spring you might force a few days into a sojourning with us.

" Dear Poole, you have borne yourself towards me most kindly with respect to my epistolary ingratitude. But I know that you forbade yourself to feel resentment towards me, because you had previously made my neglect ingratitude. A generous temper endures a great deal from one whom it has obliged deeply.

" My poems are finished. I will send you two copies the moment they are published. In No. III. of *The Watchman* there are a few lines entitled, 'The Hour when we shall meet again' ('Dim Hour! that sleep'st on pillowing clouds afar,'[2]) which I think you will like. I have received two or three letters from different *Anonymi*, requesting me to give more poetry. One of them writes thus:—

"'Sir, I detest your principles; your prose I think very so so; but your poetry is so beautiful that I take in your Watchman solely on account of it. In justice therefore to me and some others of my stamp, I entreat you to give us more verse, and less democratic scurrility. Your Admirer, —not Esteemer.'

" Have you read over Dr. Lardner on the Logos? It is, I think, scarcely possible to read it, and not be convinced. I find that *The Watchman* comes more easy to me, so that I shall begin about my Christian Lectures," (meaning a publication of the course given in the preceding year.) " I will immediately order for you, unless you immediately countermand it, Count Rumford's Essays; in No. V. of *The Watchman* you will see why." (That number contained a critique on the Essays.) " I have enclosed Dr. Beddoes's late pamphlets, neither of them as yet published. The Doctor sent them to me. * * * My dutiful love to your excellent Mother, whom, believe me, I think of frequently

[2] Remains I. p. 43. Poems, single vol. p. 49. S. C.

and with a pang of affection. God bless you. I'll try and contrive to scribble a line and half every time the man goes with *The Watchman* to you.

"N.B. The Essay on Fasting I am ashamed of"—(in No. II. of *The Watchman*);—"but it is one of my misfortunes that I am obliged to publish *ex tempore* as well as compose. God bless you. "S. T. COLERIDGE."

Two days afterwards Mr. Coleridge wrote to Mr. B. Flower, then the editor of the Cambridge Intelligencer, with whom he had been acquainted at the University:—

"DEAR SIR, April 1, 1796.

"I TRANSMITTED to you by Mr. B—— a copy of my *Conciones ad Populum*, and of an Address against the Bills," (meaning The Plot Discovered). "I have taken the liberty of enclosing ten of each, carriage paid, which you may perhaps have an opportunity of disposing of for me;—if not, give them away. The one is an eighteen-penny affair;—the other ninepence. I have likewise enclosed the Numbers which have been hitherto published of *The Watchman*;—some of the Poetry may perhaps be serviceable to you in your paper. That sonnet on the rejection of Mr. Wilberforce's Bill in your Chronicle the week before last was written by Southey, author of Joan of Arc, a year and a half ago, and sent to me per letter;—how it appeared with the late signature, let the plagiarist answer. * * I have sent a copy of my Poems"—(they were not yet published):—"will you send them to Lunn and Deighton, and ask of them whether they would choose to have their names on the title page as publishers; and would you permit me to have yours? Robinson and, I believe, Cadell, will be the London publishers. Be so kind as to send an immediate answer.

"Please to present one of each of my pamphlets to Mr. Hall"—(the late Robert Hall, the Baptist.) "I wish I could reach the perfection of his style. I think his style the best in the English language; if he have a rival, it is Mrs. Barbauld.

"You have, of course, seen Bishop Watson's Apology for the Bible. It is a complete confutation of Paine; but that was no difficult matter. The most formidable Infidel

is Lessing, the author of *Emilia Galotti*;—I ought to have written, *was*, for he is dead. His book is not yet translated, and is entitled, in German, 'Fragments of an Anonymous Author.' It unites the wit of Voltaire with the subtlety of Hume and the profound erudition of *our* Lardner. I had some thoughts of translating it with an Answer, but gave it up, lest men, whose tempers and hearts incline them to disbelief, should get hold of it; and, though the answers are satisfactory to my own mind, they may not be equally so to the minds of others.

"I suppose you have heard that I am married. I was married on the 4th of October.

"I rest all my poetical credit on the Religious Musings. Farewell; with high esteem, yours sincerely,

"S. T. COLERIDGE."

*To Mr. Poole.*

"MY DEAR, VERY DEAR FRIEND, 11th April, 1796.

"I HAVE sent the 5th, 6th, and part of the 7th Number—all as yet printed. Your censures are all right: I wish your praises were equally so. The Essay on Fasts I am ashamed of. It was conceived in the spirit, and clothed in the harsh scoffing, of an Infidel. You wish to have one long essay;—so should I wish; but so do not my subscribers wish. I feel the perplexities of my undertaking increase daily. In London and Bristol *The Watchman* is read for its original matter,—the news and debates barely tolerated. The people of Liverpool, Manchester, and Birmingham, &c., take it as a newspaper, and regard the essays and poems as intruders unwished for and unwelcome. In short, each subscriber, instead of regarding himself as a point in the circumference entitled to some one diverging ray, considers me as the circumference, and himself as the centre to which all the rays ought to converge. To tell you the truth, I do not think *The Watchman* will succeed. Hitherto I have scarcely sold enough to pay the expenses;—no wonder, when I tell you that on the 200 which Parsons in Paternoster Row sells weekly, he gains eight shillings more than I do. Nay, I am convinced that at the end of

the half year he will have cleared considerably more by his 200 than I by the proprietorship of the whole work.

"Colson has been indefatigable in my service, and writes with such zeal for my interests, and such warmth of sorrow for my sufferings, as if he wrote with fire and tears. God bless him! I wish above all things to realize a school. I could be well content to plod from morning to night, if only I could secure a secure competence; but to toil incessantly for uncertain bread weighs me down to earth.

"Your Night-dream has been greatly admired. Dr. Beddoes spoke in high commendation of it. Your thoughts on Elections I will insert whenever Parliament is dissolved. I will insert them as the opinions of a sensible correspondent, entering my individual protest against giving a vote in any way or for any person. If you had an estate in the swamps of Essex, you could not prudently send an aguish man there to be your manager,—he would be unfit for it; —you could not honestly send a hale hearty man there, for the situation would to a moral certainty give him the ague. So with the Parliament:—I will not send a rogue there; and I would not send an honest man, for it is twenty to one that he will become a rogue.

"Count Rumford's Essays you shall have by the next parcel. I thank you for your kind permission with respect to books. I have sent down to you Elegiac Stanzas by Bowles; they were given to me, but are altogether unworthy of Bowles. I have sent you Beddoes's Essay on the merits of William Pitt; you may either keep it, and I will get another for myself on your account, or if you see nothing in it to library-ize it, send it me back next Thursday, or whenever you have read it. My own Poems you will welcome. I pin all my poetical credit on the Religious Musings. In the poem you so much admired in *The Watchman*, for 'Now life and joy,' read 'New life and joy.'" (From *The Hour when we shall meet again.*) "Chatterton shall appear modernized. Dr. Beddoes intends, I believe, to give a course of Chemistry in a most *elementary* manner,—the price, two guineas. I wish, ardently wish, you could possibly attend them, and live with me. My house is most

beautifully situated; an excellent room and bed are at your service. If you had any scruple about putting me to additional expense, you should pay me seven shillings a week, and I should gain by you.

"Mrs. Coleridge is remarkably well, and sends her kind love. Pray, my dear, dear Poole, do not neglect to write to me every week. Your critique on Joan of Arc and the Religious Musings I expect. Your dear mother I long to see. Tell her I love her with filial respectfulness. Excellent woman! Farewell; God bless you and your grateful and affectionate "S. T. COLERIDGE."

Mr. C's first volume of poems was published by Mr. Cottle in the beginning of April, 1796, and his sense of the kind conduct of the latter to him throughout the whole affair was expressed in the following manner on a blank leaf in a copy of the work:—

"DEAR COTTLE,

"ON the blank leaf of my Poems I can most appropriately write my acknowledgments to you for your too disinterested conduct in the purchase of them. Indeed, if ever they should acquire a name and character, it might be truly said the world owed them to you. Had it not been for you, none perhaps of them would have been published, and some not written.

"Your obliged and affectionate friend,

"Bristol, April 15, 1798. S. T. COLERIDGE."

*To Mr. Cottle.*

"MY EVER DEAR COTTLE, (April) 1796.

"I WILL wait on you this evening at nine o'clock, till which hour I am on 'Watch.' Your Wednesday's invitation I of course accept, but I am rather sorry that you should add this expense to former liberalities.

"Two editions of my Poems would barely repay you. Is it not possible to get 25 or 30 of the Poems ready by to-morrow, as Parsons, of Paternoster Row, has written to me pressingly about them? 'People are perpetually asking

after them. All admire the poetry in the Watchman,' he says. I can send them with 100 of the first number, which he has written for. I think if you were to send half a dozen Joans of Arc (4to. £1 1*s.* 0*d.*) on sale or return, it would not be amiss. To all the places in the North we will send my Poems, my *Conciones*, and the Joans of Arc together, *per* waggon. You shall pay the carriage for the London and Birmingham parcels; I for the Sheffield, Derby, Nottingham, Manchester, and Liverpool.

"With regard to the Poems I mean to give away, I wish to make it a common interest; that is; I will give away a sheet full of Sonnets. One to Mrs. Barbauld; one to Wakefield; one to Dr. Beddoes; one to Wrangham—a college acquaintance of mine,—an admirer of me, and a pitier of my principles;—one to George Augustus Pollen, Esq.; one to C. Lamb; one to Wordsworth; one to my brother George, and one to Dr. Parr. These Sonnets I mean to write on the blank leaf, respectively, of each copy."

* * * * God bless you, and

"S. T. COLERIDGE."

"The Sonnets," says Mr. Cottle, "never arrived."

*To Mr. Poole.*

"MY VERY DEAR FRIEND, 6th May, 1796.

"THE heart is a little relieved, when vexation converts itself into anger. But from this privilege I am utterly precluded by my own epistolary sins and negligences. Yet in very troth thou must be a hard-hearted fellow to let me trot for four weeks together every Thursday to the Bear Inn —to receive no letter. I have sometimes thought that Milton the carrier did not deliver my last parcel, but he assures me he did.

"This morning I received a truly fraternal letter from your brother Richard of Sherborn, containing good and acceptable advice. He deems my Religious Musings 'too metaphysical for common readers.' I answer—the poem was not written for common readers. In so miscellaneous a collection as I have presented to the Public, *singula cin-*

*que* should be the motto. There are, however, instances of vicious affectation in the phraseology of that poem;—*unshudder'd, unaghasted*, for example." (*Not in the poem now.*)

"Good writing is produced more effectually by rapidly glancing the language as it already exists than by a hasty recourse to the mint of invention. The Religious Musings has more mind than the Introduction of B. II. of Joan of Arc, (*Destiny of Nations*, Poet. W. I. p. 98) but its versification is not equally rich. It has more passages of sublimity, but it has not that diffused air of severe dignity which characterizes my epic slice. Have I estimated my own performances rightly? * * *

"With regard to my own affairs they are as bad as the most rampant philo-despot could wish in the moment of cursing. After No. XII. I shall cease to cry the state of the political atmosphere. It is not pleasant, Thomas Poole, to have worked fourteen weeks for nothing—for nothing; nay, to have given to the Public in addition to that toil, 45*l.* When I began the Watchman I had 40*l.* worth of paper given to me; yet with this I shall not have received a farthing at the end of the quarter. To be sure I have been somewhat fleeced and over-reached by my London publisher. In short, my tradesmen's bills for *The Watchman*, including what paper I have bought since the seventh number, the printing, &c., amount exactly to 5*l.* more than the whole of my receipts. *O Watchman, thou hast watched in vain!*—said the Prophet Ezekiel, when, I suppose, he was taking a prophetic glimpse of my sorrow-sallowed cheeks.

"My plans are reduced to two;—the first unpracticable,—the second not likely to succeed.

Plan I. I am studying German, and in about six weeks shall be able to read that language with tolerable fluency. Now I have some thoughts of making a proposal to Robinson, the great London bookseller, of transluting all the works of Schiller, which would make a portly quarto, on condition that he should pay my journey and my wife's to and from Jena, a cheap German University where Schiller resides, and allow me two guineas each quarto sheet, which would maintain me. If I could realize this scheme, I

should there study chemistry and anatomy, and bring over with me all the works of Semler and Michaelis, the German theologians, and of Kant, the great German metaphysician. On my return I would commence a school for eight young men at 105*l.* each, proposing to perfect them in the following studies in this order:—1. Man as an Animal;—including the complete knowledge of anatomy, chemistry, mechanics, and optics:—2. Man as an Intellectual Being;—including the ancient metaphysics, the system of Locke and Hartley—of the Scotch philosophers—and the new Kantean system:—3. Man as a Religious Being;—including an historic summary of all religions, and of the arguments for and against natural and revealed religion. Then proceeding from the individual to the aggregate of individuals, and disregarding all chronology, except that of mind, I should perfect them: 1—in the history of savage tribes; 2—of semi-barbarous nations; 3—of nations emerging from semi-barbarism; 4—of civilized states; 5—of luxurious states; 6—of revolutionary states; 7—of colonies. During these studies I should intermix the knowledge of languages, and instruct my scholars in *belles lettres*, and the principles of composition.

"Now, seriously, do you think that one of my scholars, thus perfected, would make a better senator than perhaps any one member in either of our Houses?—Bright bubbles of the age—ebullient brain! Gracious Heaven! that a scheme so big with advantage to this kingdom—therefore to Europe—therefore to the world—should be demolishable by one monosyllable from a bookseller's mouth!

"My second plan is to become a Dissenting Minister, and abjure politics and casual literature. Preaching for hire is not right; because it must prove a strong temptation to continue to profess what I may have ceased to believe, *if ever* maturer judgment with wider and deeper reading should lessen or destroy my faith in Christianity. But though not right in itself, it may become right by the greater wrongness of the only alternative—the remaining in neediness and uncertainty. That in the one case I should be exposed to temptation is a mere contingency; that under

necessitous circumstances I am exposed to great and frequent temptations is a melancholy certainty.

"Write, my dear Poole! or I will crimp all the rampant Billingsgate of Burke to abuse you. Count Rumford is being reprinted.

"God bless you and

"S. T. COLERIDGE."

On Friday, the 13th of May, 1796, the tenth and last number of *The Watchman* appeared—the Author having wisely accelerated the termination of a hopeless undertaking, the plan of which was as injudicious as the execution of it by him for any length of time impracticable. Of the 324 pages, of which *The Watchman* consists, not more than a hundred contain original matter by Coleridge, and this is perhaps more remarkable as a test of the marvellous spring of his mind almost immediately afterwards than for any very striking merit of its own. Still, however, the nascent philosopher may be discovered in parts; and the Essay on the Slave Trade, in the fourth number, may be justly distinguished as comprising a perfect summary of the arguments applicable on either side of that question.

In the meantime Mr. Poole had been engaged in circulating a proposal amongst a few common friends for purchasing a small annuity and presenting it to Mr. Coleridge. The plan was not in fact carried into execution; but it was communicated to Mr. C. by Mr. Poole, and the following letter refers to it:—

*To Mr. Poole.*

"12th May, 1796.

"POOLE! The Spirit, who counts the throbbings of the solitary heart, knows that what my feelings ought to be, such they are. If it were in my power to give you anything, which I have not already given, I should be oppressed by the letter now before me. But no! I feel myself rich in being poor; and because I have nothing to bestow, I know how much I have bestowed. Perhaps I shall not make myself intelligible; but the strong and unmixed affection which I bear to you seems to exclude all emotions of gra-

titude, and renders even the principle of esteem latent and inert. Its presence is not perceptible, though its absence could not be endured.

"Concerning the scheme itself I am undetermined. Not that I am ashamed to receive;—God forbid! I will make every possible exertion; my industry shall be at least commensurate with my learning and talents;—if these do not procure for me and mine the necessary comforts of life, I can receive as I would bestow, and, in either case—receiving or bestowing—be equally grateful to my Almighty Benefactor. I am undetermined therefore—not because I receive with pain and reluctance, but—because I suspect that you attribute to others your own enthusiasm of benevolence; as if the sun should say—'With how rich a purple those opposite windows are burning!' But with God's permission I shall talk with you on this subject. By the last page of No. X., you will perceive that I have this day dropped *The Watchman*. On Monday morning I will go *per* caravan to Bridgewater, where, if you have a horse of tolerable meekness unemployed, you will let him meet me.

"I should blame you for the exaggerated terms in which you have spoken of me in the Proposal, did I not perceive the motive. You wished to make it appear an offering—not a favour—and in excess of delicacy have, I fear, fallen into some grossness of flattery.

"God bless you, my dear, very dear Friend. The widow is calm, and amused with her beautiful infant.[3] We are all become more religious than we were. God be ever praised for all things! Mrs. Coleridge begs her kind love to you. To your dear Mother my filial respects.

"S. T. COLERIDGE."

The visit to Mr. Poole at Stowey was paid, and Mr. C. returned to Bristol on the 20th of May, 1796. On his way back he wrote the following letter to Mr. Poole from Bridgewater:—

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[3] Mrs. Robert Lovell, whose husband had been carried off by a fever, about two years after his marriage with my Aunt. S.C.

"MY DEAR POOLE, 29th May, 1796.

"THIS said caravan does not leave Bridgewater till nine. In the market-place stand the hustings. I mounted, and pacing the boards, mused on bribery, false swearing, and other foibles of election times. I have wandered too by the river Parret, which looks as filthy as if all the parrots in the House of Commons had been washing their consciences therein. Dear Gutter of Stowey! Were I transported to Italian plains, and lying by the side of a streamlet which murmured through an orange grove, I would think of thee, dear Gutter of Stowey, and wish that I were poring on thee!

"So much by way of rant. I have eaten three eggs, swallowed sundries of tea and bread and butter, purely for the purpose of amusing myself, and I have seen the horse fed. When at Cross, where I shall dine, I shall think of your happy dinner celebrated under the auspices of humble independence, supported by brotherly love. I am writing, you understand, for no worldly purpose but that of avoiding anxious thoughts. Apropos of honey-pie:—Caligula or Heliogabalus, (I forget which,) had a dish of nightingales' tongues served up. What think you of the stings of bees? God bless you. My filial love to your mother, and fraternity to your sister. Tell Ellen Cruikshanks, that in my next parcel to you I will send my Haleswood Poem to her. Heaven protect her, and you, and Sara, and your Mother, and—like a bad shilling passed off in a handful of guineas. —your affectionate friend and brother,

"S. T. COLERIDGE.

"P. S. Don't forget to send by Milton my old clothes and linen that once was clean—a pretty *periphrasis* that!"

The month of June, 1796, was spent in Bristol, and some negotiation took place as to Mr. C.'s settling in Nottingham, the particulars of which the Editor is unable to state. On the 4th of July Mr. Coleridge writes to Mr. Poole.

*To Mr. Poole.*

"MY VERY DEAR POOLE, 4th July, 1796.

"Do not attribute it to indolence that I have not written

to you. Suspense has been the real cause of my silence. Day after day I have confidently expected some decisive letter, and as often have been disappointed. 'Certainly I shall have one to-morrow noon, and then I will write.' Thus I contemplated the time of my silence in its small component parts, forgetful into what a sum total they were swelling. As I have heard nothing from Nottingham notwithstanding I have written a pressing letter, I have, by the advice of Cottle and Dr. Beddoes, accepted a proposal of Mr. Perry's, the editor of the Morning Chronicle,—accepted it with a heavy and reluctant heart. On Thursday Perry was at Bristol for a few hours, just time enough to attend the dying moments of his associate in the editorship, Mr. Grey, whom Dr. Beddoes attended. Perry desired Dr. B. to inform me that, if I would come up to London and write for him, he would make me a regular compensation adequate to the maintenance of myself and Mrs. Coleridge, and requested an immediate answer by the post. Mr. Estlin, and Charles Danvers, and Mr. Wade are or were all out of town;—I had no one to advise with except Dr. Beddoes and Cottle. Dr. B. thinks it a good opening on account of Grey's death; but I rather think that the intention is to employ me as a mere hackney without any share of the profits. However, as I am doing nothing, and in the prospect of doing nothing settled, I was afraid to give way to the *omenings* of my heart; and accordingly I accepted his proposal in general terms, requesting a line from him expressing the particulars both of my proposed occupation and stipend. This I shall receive to-morrow, I suppose; and if I do, I think of hiring a horse for a couple of days, and galloping down to you to have all your advice, which indeed, if it should be for rejecting the proposals, I might receive by post; but if for finally accepting them, we could not interchange letters in a time sufficiently short for Perry's needs, and so he might procure another person possibly. At all events I should not like to leave this part of England—perhaps for ever—without seeing you once more. I am very sad about it, for I love Bristol, and I do not love London; and besides, local and temporary politics have

become my aversion. They narrow the understanding, and at least acidulate the heart; but those two giants, yclept Bread and Cheese, bend me into compliance. I must do something. If I go, farewell, Philosophy! farewell, the Muse! farewell, my literary Fame!

"My Poems have been reviewed. The Monthly has cataracted panegyric on me; the Critical cascaded it, and the Analytical dribbled it with civility. As to the British Critic, they durst not condemn, and they would not praise —so contented themselves with commending me as a *poet*, and allowed me 'tenderness of sentiment and elegance of fiction.' I am so anxious and uneasy that I really cannot write any further. My kind and fraternal love to your Sister, and my filial respects to your dear Mother, and believe me to be in my head, heart, and soul, yours most sincerely,

"S. T. COLERIDGE."

The Editor can find no further trace of the proposed connection with the Morning Chronicle; but almost immediately after the date of the preceding letter, Mr. Coleridge received an invitation from Mrs. Evans, then of Darley, near Derby, to visit her with a view to his undertaking the education of her sons. He and Mrs. C. accordingly went to Darley, where the matter was arranged to the satisfaction of both parties; and Mr. C. returned to Bristol alone with the intention of visiting his Mother and Brother at Ottery before leaving the south of England for what promised to be a long absence. But this project, like others, ended in nothing. The other guardians of Mrs. E.'s sons considered a public education proper for them, and the announcement of this resolution to Mr. C. at Bristol stopped his further progress, and recalled him to Darley. After a stay of some ten days he left Darley with Mrs. C., and visited Mr. Thomas Hawkes at Mosely, near Birmingham, and thence he wrote to Mr. Poole—

*To Mr. Poole.*

"MY BELOVED FRIEND, August, 1796.

"I WAS at Matlock, the place monodized by Bowles, when

your letter arrived at Darley, and I did not receive it till near a week afterwards. My very dear Poole, I wrote to you the whole truth. After the first moment I was perfectly composed, and from that moment to the present have continued calm and lighthearted. I had just quitted you, and I felt myself rich in your love and esteem; and you do not know how rich I feel myself. O ever found the same, and trusted and beloved!

"The last sentences of your letter affected me more than I can well describe. Words and phrases which might perhaps have adequately expressed my feelings, the cold-blooded children of this world have anticipated and exhausted in their unmeaning gabble of flattery. I use common expressions, but they do not convey common feelings. My heart has thanked you. I preached on Faith yesterday. I said that Faith was infinitely better than Good Works, as the cause is greater than the effect,—as a fruitful tree is better than its fruits, and as a friendly heart is of far higher value than the kindnesses which it naturally and necessarily prompts. It is for that friendly heart that I now have thanked you, and which I so eagerly accept; for with regard to settlement, I am likely to be better off now than before, as I shall proceed to tell you.

"I arrived at Darley on the Sunday. * * * * * Monday I spent at Darley. On the Tuesday Mrs. Coleridge, Miss Willett, and I went in Mrs. Evans's carriage to Matlock, where we stayed till Saturday. * * * Sunday we spent at Darley, and on Monday Sara, Mrs. Evans, and myself visited Oakover, a seat famous for a few first-rates of Raffael and Titian; thence to Ilam, a quiet vale hung round with wood, beautiful beyond expression, and thence to Dovedale, a place beyond expression tremendously sublime. Here, in a cavern at the head of a divine little fountain, we dined on cold meat, and returned to Darley, quite worn out with the succession of sweet sensations. On Tuesday we were employed in packing up, and on Wednesday we were to have set off. * * * But on the Wednesday Dr. Crompton, who had just returned from Liverpool, called on me, and made me the following propo-

sal:—that if I would take a house in Derby and open a day-school, confining my number to twelve scholars, he would send three of his children on these terms—till my number should be completed, he would allow me £100 a year for them;—when the number should be complete, he would give £21 a year for each of them:—the children to be with me from nine to twelve, and from two to five—the last two hours to be employed with their writing or drawing-master, who would be paid by the parents. He has no doubt but that I shall complete my number almost instantly. Now 12×20 guineas = £252, and my mornings and evenings at my own disposal = good things. So I accepted the offer, it being understood that if anything better offered, I should accept it. There was not a house to be got in Derby; but I engaged with a man for a house now building, and which is to be completed by the 8th of October, for 12*l.* a year, and the landlord to pay all the taxes except the Poor Rates. The landlord is rather an intelligent fellow, and has promised me to Rumfordize the chimneys. The plan is to commence in November; the intermediate time I spend at Bristol, at which place I shall arrive, by the blessing of God, on Monday night next. This week I spend with Mr. Hawkes, at Mosely, near Birmingham; in whose shrubbery I now write. I arrived here on Friday, having left Derby on Friday. I preached here yesterday.

"If Sara will let me, I shall see you for a few days in the course of a month. Direct your next letter to S. T. C., Oxford Street, Bristol. My love to your dear Mother and Sister, and believe me affectionately your ever faithful friend,

"S. T. COLERIDGE.

"I shall write to my Mother and Brothers to-morrow."

At the same time Mr. C. wrote to Mr. Wade in terms similar to the above, adding that at Matlock the time was completely filled up with seeing the country, eating, concerts, &c." I was the first fiddle;—not in the concerts—but every where else, and the company would not spare me twenty minutes together. Sunday I dedicated to the drawing up

my sketch of education, which I meant to publish, to try to get a school!" He speaks of "the thrice lovely valley of Ilam; a vale hung with beautiful woods all round, except just at its entrance, where, as you stand at the other end of the valley, you see a bare bleak mountain standing as it were to guard the entrance. It is without exception the most beautiful place I ever visited." * * * He concludes:— "I have seen a letter from Mr. William Roscoe, author of the Life of Lorenzo the Magnificent; a work in two 4to. volumes, (of which the whole first edition sold in a month); it was addressed to Mr. Edwards, the minister here, and entirely related to me. Of me and my compositions he writes in terms of high admiration, and concludes by desiring Mr. Edwards to let him know my situation and prospects, and saying that if I would come and settle at Liverpool, he thought a comfortable situation might be procured for me. This day Edwards will write to him."

Whilst at Birmingham, on *The Watchman* tour, Mr. C. had been introduced to Mr. Charles Lloyd, the eldest son of Mr. Lloyd, an eminent banker of that place. At Mosely they met again, and the result of an intercourse for a few days together was an ardent desire on the part of Lloyd to domesticate himself permanently with a man whose conversation was to him a revelation from Heaven. Nothing, however, was settled on this occasion, and Mr. and Mrs. C. returned to Bristol in the beginning of September. On the 24th of September he writes to Mr. Poole:—

*To Mr. Poole.*

"24th September, 1796.

"MY DEAR, VERY DEAR POOLE,

"THE heart thoroughly penetrated with the flame of virtuous friendship is in a state of glory; but lest it should be exalted above measure, there is given to it a thorn in the flesh. I mean that where the friendship of any person forms an essential part of a man's happiness, he will at times be pestered with the little jealousies and solicitudes of imbecile humanity. Since we last parted I have been gloomily

dreaming that you did not leave me so affectionately as you were wont to do. Pardon this littleness of heart, and do not think the worse of me for it. Indeed my soul seems so mantled and wrapped round with your love and esteem, that even a dream of losing but the smallest fragment of it makes me shiver, as if some tender part of my nature were left uncovered and in nakedness.

"Last week I received a letter from Lloyd, informing me that his parents had given their joyful concurrence to his residence with me, but that, if it were possible that I could be absent from home for three or four days, his father wished particularly to see me. I consulted Mrs. Coleridge, who advised me to go. * * Accordingly on Saturday night I went by the mail to Birmingham, and was introduced to the father, who is a mild man, very liberal in his ideas, and in religion an allegorizing Quaker. I mean that all the apparently irrational parts of his sect he allegorizes into significations, which for the most part you or I might assent to. We became well acquainted, and he expressed himself thankful to Heaven, 'that his son was about to be with me.' He said he would write to me concerning money matters, after his son had been some time under my roof.

"On Tuesday morning I was surprised by a letter from Mr. Maurice, our medical attendant, informing me that Mrs. C. was delivered on Monday, 19th September, 1796, half-past two in the morning, of a son, and that both she and the child were uncommonly well. I was quite annihilated with the suddenness of the information, and retired to my room to address myself to my Maker, but I could only offer up to Him the silence of stupified feelings. I hastened home, and Charles Lloyd returned with me. When I first saw the child, I did not feel that thrill and overflowing of affection which I expected. I looked on it with a melancholy gaze; my mind was intensely contemplative, and my heart only sad. But when two hours after, I saw it at the bosom of its mother—on her arm—and her eye tearful and watching its little features—then I was thrilled and melted, and gave it the kiss of a Father. * * * * The baby seems strong, and the old nurse has over-persuaded my wife

to discover a likeness to me in its face,—no great compliment to me; for in truth I have seen handsomer babies in my life time. Its name is David Hartley Coleridge. I hope that ere he be a man, if God destines him for continuance in this life, his head will be convinced of, and his heart saturated with, the truths so ably supported by that great master of Christian Philosophy.

"Charles Lloyd wins upon me hourly; his heart is uncommonly pure, his affections delicate, and his benevolence enlivened, but not sicklied, by sensibility. He is assuredly a man of great genius; but it must be in a *téte-à-téte* with one whom he loves and esteems that his colloquial powers open:—and this arises not from reserve or want of simplicity, but from having been placed in situations, where for years together he met with no congenial minds, and where the contrariety of his thoughts and notions to the thoughts and notions of those around him induced the necessity of habitually suppressing his feelings. His joy and gratitude to Heaven for the circumstance of his domestication with me, I can scarcely describe to you; and I believe his fixed plans are of being always with me. His father told me, that if he saw that his son had formed habits of severe economy, he should not insist upon his adopting any profession; as then his fair share of his (the father's) wealth would be sufficient for him.

"My dearest Poole, can you conveniently receive Lloyd and me in the course of a week? I have much, very much, to say to you, and to consult with you about; for my heart is heavy respecting Derby; and my feelings are so dim and huddled, that though I can, I am sure, communicate them to you by my looks and broken sentences, I scarcely know how to convey them in a letter. C. Lloyd also wishes much to know you personally. I shall write on the other side of the paper two of his sonnets, composed by him in one evening at Birmingham. The latter of them alludes to the conviction of the truth of Christianity, which he had received from me. Let me hear from you by post immediately, and give my kind love to your sister and dear mother, and likewise my love to that young man with the

soul-beaming face, which I recollect much better than I do his name." (*Mr. George Ward of Over Stowey*). "God bless you, my dear friend, and believe me with deep affection yours,

"S. T. COLERIDGE."

The reader of Coleridge's Poems will remember the beautiful lines *To a young Friend, on his proposing to domesticate with the Author.* (P. W. I. p. 246). They were written at this time and addressed to Lloyd; and it may be easily conceived what a deep impression of delight they would make on a mind and temperament so refined and enthusiastic as his. The Sonnet *To a Friend who asked how I felt when the Nurse first presented my infant to me*— (I. p. 252.) is the metrical version of a passage in the foregoing letter. A short time before the birth of little Hartley C., Mr. Southey had returned to Bristol from Portugal, and was in lodgings nearly opposite to Mr. Coleridge's house in Oxford Street. There had been a quarrel between them on the occasion of the abandonment of the American scheme, which was first announced by Mr. Southey, and he and Coleridge had ceased to have any intercourse. But a year's absence had dissipated all angry feelings, and after Mr. C.'s return from Birmingham in the end of September, Southey took the first step, and sent over a slip of paper with a word or two of conciliation.[4] This was immediately followed by an interview, and in an hour's time these two extraordinary youths were arm in arm again. They were indeed of essentially opposite tempers, powers, and habits; yet each well knew and appreciated the other,—perhaps even the more deeply from the contrast between them. Circumstances separated them in after life; but Mr. Coleridge recorded his

[4] The paper contained a sentence in English from Schiller's Conspiracy of Fiesco at Genoa. *Fiesko! Fiesko! du räumst einen Platz in meiner Brust, den das Menschengeschlecht, dreifach genommen, nicht mehr besetzen wird.* Fiesco! Fiesco! thou leavest a void in my bosom, which the human race, thrice told, will never fill up. Act V. Sc. 16. S. C.

testimony to Southey's character in this work,[5] and in his Will referred to it as expressive of his latest convictions.

On the 1st of November, 1796, Coleridge wrote the following letter to his friend :—

"MY BELOVED POOLE, November 1, 1796.

"MANY *causes* have concurred to prevent my writing to you, but all together they do not amount to a *reason*. I have seen a narrow-necked bottle, so full of water, that when turned up side down not a drop has fallen out—something like this has been the case with me. My heart has been full, yea, crammed with anxieties about my residence near you. I so ardently desire it, that any disappointment would chill all my faculties, like the fingers of death. And entertaining wishes so irrationally strong, I necessarily have *day*-mair dreams that something will prevent it—so that since I quitted you, I have been gloomy as the month which even now has begun to lower and rave on us. I verily believe, or rather I have no doubt that I should have written to you within the period of my promise, if I had not pledged myself for a certain gift of my Muse to poor Tommy: and alas! she has been too 'sunk on the ground in dimmest heaviness' to permit me to trifle. Yet intending it hourly I deferred my letter *à la mode* the procrastinator! Ah! me. I wonder not that the hours fly so sweetly by me—for they pass unfreighted with the duties which they came to demand!

* * * * *

"* * * I wrote a long letter to Dr. Crompton, and received from him a very kind letter, which I will send you in the parcel I am about to convey by Milton.

"My Poems are come to a second edition, that is the first edition is sold. I shall alter the lines of the *Joan of Arc*, and make *one* poem entitled *Progress of European Liberty, a Vision*;—the first line "Auspicious Reverence! hush all meaner song," &c. and begin the volume with it. Then the *Chatterton,—Pixies' Parlour,—Effusions 27 and 28—To a young Ass—Tell me on what holy ground—The Sigh—*

[5] Vol. I. chap. iii. pp. 53 64. S. C.

*Epitaph on an Infant—The Man of Ross—Spring in a Village—Edmund—Lines with a poem on the French Revolution*—Seven Sonnets, namely, those at pp. 45, 59, 60, 61, 64, 65, 66—*Shurton Bars—My pensive Sara—Low was our pretty Cot—Religious Musings*;—these in the order I have placed them. Then another title-page with *Juvenilia* on it, and an advertisement signifying that the Poems were retained by the desire of some friends, but that they are to be considered as being in the Author's own opinion of very inferiour merit. In this sheet will be *Absence—La Fayette—Genevieve—Kosciusko—Autumnal Moon—To the Nightingale—Imitation of Spenser—A Poem written in early youth.* All the others will be finally and totally omitted. It is strange that in the *Sonnet to Schiller* I should have written—'that hour I would have wished to *die*—Lest—aught more mean might stamp me *mortal*;'—the bull never struck me till Charles Lloyd mentioned it. The sense is evident enough, but the word is ridiculously ambiguous.

"Lloyd is a very good fellow, and most certainly a young man of great genius. He desires his kindest love to you. I will write again by Milton, for I really can write no more now—I am so depressed. But I will fill up the letter with poetry of mine, or Lloyd's, or Southey's. Is your Sister married? May the Almighty bless her!—may he enable her to make all her new friends as pure, and mild, and amiable as herself!—I pray in the fervency of my soul. Is your dear Mother well? My filial respects to her. Remember me to Ward. David Hartley Coleridge is stout, healthy, and handsome. He is the very miniature of me. Your grateful and affectionate friend and brother,

"S. T. COLERIDGE."

Speaking of lines by Mr. Southey, called *Inscription for the Cenotaph at Ermenonville*,[6] written in his letter, Mr. C. says, "This is beautiful, but instead of Ermenonville and Rousseau put Valchiusa and Petrarch. I do not particularly admire Rousseau. Bishop Taylor, old Baxter, David Hartley, and the Bishop of Cloyne are my men."

[6] Afterwards included among the *Minor Poems* of Mr. S. S. C.

The following Sonnet, transcribed in the foregoing Letter, has not been printed. 'It puts in,' he says, 'no claim to poetry, but it is a most faithful picture of my feelings on a very interesting event.' See the Letter to Mr. Poole of 24th September, 1796. This Sonnet shows in a remarkable way how little the Unitarianism, which Mr. C. professed at this time, operated on his fundamental *feelings* as a catholic Christian.

*On receiving a Letter informing me of the birth of a Son.*

When they did greet me Father, sudden awe
Weigh'd down my spirit: I retir'd and knelt
Seeking the throne of grace, but inly felt
No heavenly visitation upwards draw
My feeble mind, nor cheering ray impart.
Ah me! before the Eternal Sire I brought
Th' unquiet silence of confused thought
And hopeless feelings: my o'erwhelmed heart
Trembled, and vacant tears stream'd down my face.
And now once more, O Lord! to thee I bend,
Lover of souls! and groan for future grace,
That, ere my babe youth's perilous maze have trod,
Thy overshadowing Spirit may descend,
And he be born again, a child of God!

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It was not till the summer of 1797 that the second edition of Mr. C.'s Poems actually appeared, before which time he had seen occasion to make many alterations in the proposed arrangement of, and had added some of his most beautiful compositions to, the collection. It is curious, however, that he never varied the diction of the Sonnet to Schiller in the particular to which he refers in the preceding Letter.

*To Mr. Poole.*

"5, November, 1796.

"THANKS, my heart's warm thanks to you, my beloved Friend, for your tender letter! Indeed I did not deserve so kind a one; but by this time you have received my last. To live in a beautiful country, and to enure myself as much as possible to the labours of the field, have been for this year past my dream of the day, my sigh at midnight. But to

enjoy these blessings near you, to see you daily, to tell you all my thoughts in their first birth, and to hear yours, to be mingling identities with you, as it were!—the vision-weaving Fancy has indeed often pictured such things, but Hope never dared whisper a promise. Disappointment! Disappointment! dash not from my trembling hand this bowl, which almost touches my lips. Envy me not this immortal draught, and I will forgive thee all thy persecutions! Forgive thee! Impious! I will bless thee, black-vested minister of Optimism, stern pioneer of happiness! Thou hast been the cloud before me from the day that I left the flesh-pots of Egypt, and was led through the way of a wilderness—the cloud that had been guiding me to a land flowing with milk and honey—the milk of innocence, the honey of friendship!

"I wanted such a letter as yours, for I am very unwell. On Wednesday night I was seized with an intolerable pain from my right temple to the tip of my right shoulder, including my right eye, cheek, jaw, and that side of the throat. I was nearly frantic, and ran about the house almost naked, endeavouring by every means to excite sensation in different parts of my body, and so to weaken the enemy by creating a division. It continued from one in the morning till half-past five, and left me pale and fainty. It came on fitfully, but not so violently, several times on Thursday, and began severer threats towards night; but I took between 60 and 70 drops of laudanum, and sopped the Cerberus just as his mouth began to open. On Friday it only niggled, as if the Chief had departed, as from a conquered place, and merely left a small garrison behind, or as if he had evacuated the Corrica, and a few straggling pains only remained. But this morning he returned in full force, and his name is Legion. Giant-Fiend of a hundred hands, with a shower of arrowy death-pangs he transpierced me, and then he became a Wolf and lay gnawing my bones!—I am not mad, most noble Festus! but in sober sadness I have suffered this day more bodily pain than I had before a conception of. My right cheek has certainly been placed with admirable exactness under the focus of some invisible burning-glass, which con-

centrated all the rays of a Tartarean sun. My medical attendant decides it to be altogether nervous, and that it originates either in severe application, or excessive anxiety. My beloved Poole, in excessive anxiety I believe it might originate. I have a blister under my right ear, and I take 25 drops of laudanum every five hours, the ease and spirits gained by which have enabled me to write to you this flighty, but not exaggerating, account. With a gloomy wantonness of imagination I had been coquetting with the hideous possibles of disappointment. I drank fears like wormwood—yea—made myself drunken with bitterness; for my ever-shaping and distrustful mind still mingled gall-drops, till out of the cup of Hope I almost poisoned myself with Despair.

"Your letter is dated 2. November; I wrote to you on the 1st. Your Sister was married on that day; and on that day I several times felt my heart overflowed with such tendernesses for her, as made me repeatedly ejaculate prayers in her behalf. Such things are strange. It may be superstition to think about such correspondences; but it is a superstition which softens the heart and leads to no evil. We will call on your dear Sister as soon as I am quite well, and in the mean time I will write a few lines to her.

"I am anxious beyond measure to be in the country as soon as possible. I would it were possible to get a temporary residence till Adscombe is ready for us. I wish we could have three rooms in William Poole's large house for the winter. Will you try to look out for a fit servant for us,—simple of heart, physiognomically handsome, and scientific in vaccimulgence. That last word is a new one, but soft in sound, and full of expression. Vaccimulgence! I am pleased with the word. Write to me all things about yourself; where I cannot advise, I can console; and communication, which doubles joy, halves sorrow.

"Tell me whether you think it at all possible to make any terms with ————. You know, I would not wish to touch with the edge of the nail of my great toe the line which should be but half a barley-corn out of the circle of the most trembling delicacy! I will write to Cruikshanks

to-morrow, if God permit me. God bless and protect you Friend! Brother! Beloved! Sara's best love and Lloyd's. David Hartley is well. My filial love to your dear Mother. Love to Ward. Little Tommy! I often think of thee!

"S. T. COLERIDGE."

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Charles Lloyd, spoken of in a letter of my father's in the last chapter as "a young man of great genius," was born Feb. 12th, 1775, died at Versailles Jan. 15th, 1839. He published sonnets and other poems in conjunction with my Father and Mr. Lamb, in 1797, and these and Mr. Lamb's were published together, apart from my Father's, the year afterwards. "While Lamb," says Serjeant Talfourd, "was enjoying habits of the closest intimacy with Coleridge in London, he was introduced by him to a young poet whose name has often been associated with his—Charles Lloyd—the son of a wealthy banker at Birmingham, who had recently cast off the trammels of the Society of Friends, and, smitten with the love of poetry, had become a student at the University of Cambridge. There he had been attracted to Coleridge by the fascination of his discourse; and, having been admitted to his regard, was introduced by him to Lamb. Lloyd was endeared both to Lamb and Coleridge by a very amiable disposition and a pensive cast of thought; but his intellect had little resemblance to that of either. He wrote, indeed, pleasing verses and with great facility,—a facility fatal to excellence; but his mind was chiefly remarkable for the fine power of analysis which distinguishes his *London*, and other of his later compositions. In this power of discriminating and distinguishing—carried to a pitch almost of painfulness—Lloyd has scarcely ever been equalled, and his poems, though rugged in point of versification, will be found by those who will read them with the calm attention they require, replete with critical and moral suggestions of the highest value."

Beside three or four volumes of poetry Mr. Lloyd wrote novels:—*Edmund Oliver*, published soon after he became acquainted with my Father, and *Isabel*, of later date. After his marriage he settled at the lakes. "At Brathay," (the beautiful river Brathay near Ambleside,) says Mr. Dequincey, "lived Charles Lloyd, and he could not in candour be considered a common man. He was somewhat too Rousseauish, but he had in conversation very extraordinary powers for analysis of a certain

kind, applied to the philosophy of manners, and the most delicate *nuances* of social life; and his Translations of Alfieri together with his own poems, shew him to have been an accomplished scholar."

My Mother has often told me how amiable Mr. Lloyd was as a youth; how kind to her little Hartley; how well content with cottage accommodation; how painfully sensitive in all that related to the affections. I remember him myself, as he was in middle life, when he and his excellent wife were most friendly to my brothers, who were school-fellows with their sons. I did not at that time fully appreciate Mr. Lloyd's intellectual character, but was deeply impressed by the exceeding refinement and sensibility marked in his countenance and manners,—(for he was a gentleman of the old school without its formality,)—by the fluent elegance of his discourse, and, above all, by the eloquent pathos, with which he described his painful mental experiences and wild waking dreams, caused by a deranged state of the nervous system. *Le ciel nous vend toujours les biens qu' il nous prodigue.* Nervous derangement is a dear price to pay even for genius and sensibility. Too often, even if not the direct effect of these privileges, it is the accompanying drawback; hypochondria may almost be called the intellectual man's malady.

*The Duke d'Ormond*, which was written 24 years before its publication in 1822, that is in 1798, soon after Mr. Lloyd's residence at Stowey, has great merit as a dramatic poem, in the delineation of character and states of mind; the plot is forced and unnatural; not only that, but what is worse, in point of effect, it is tediously subjective; and we feel the actions of the piece to be improbable while the feelings are true to nature; yet there is tragic effect in the scenes of the dénouement. I understand what it was in Mr. Lloyd's mind which Mr. Dequincey calls *Rousseauish*. He dwelt a good deal on the temptations to which human nature is subject, when passions, not in themselves unworthy, become, from circumstances, sins if indulged, and the source of sin and misery; but the effect of this piece is altogether favourable to virtue, and to the parent and nurse of virtue, a pious conviction of the moral government of the world. The play contains an *anatomy* of passion, not a *picture* of it in a concrete form, such as the works of Richardson and of Rousseau present, a picture fitted to excite *feelings* of baneful effect upon the mind, rather than to awaken *thought*, which counteracts all

such mischief. Indeed I think no man would have sought my Father's daily society who was not predominantly given to reflection. What is very striking in this play is the character of the heroine, whose earnest and scrupulous devotion to her mother occasions the partial estrangement of her lover, d'Ormond, and, in its consequences, an overwhelming misery, which overturns her reason and causes her death, and thus, though remorse, works the conversion of those guilty persons of the drama, who have been slaves to passion, but are not all "enslaved, nor wholly vile." Strong is the contrast which this play presents, in its exhibition of the female character, with that of the celebrated French and German writers, who have treated similar subjects. Men write,—I have heard a painter say, men even paint,—as they feel and as they are. Goethe's Margaret has been thought equal to Shakespeare's Ophelia and Desdemona; in some respects it is so; but it is like a pot of sweet ointment into which some tainting matter has fallen. I think no Englishman of Goethe's genius and sensibility would have described a maiden, whom it was his intention to represent, though frail on one point, yet lovely and gentle-hearted, as capable of being induced to give her poor old mother a sleeping potion. "It will do her no harm." But the *risk!*—affection gives the wisdom of the serpent where there would else be but the simplicity of the dove. A true Englishman would have felt that such an act, so bold and undaughterly, blighted at once the lily flower, making it "put on darkness" and "fall into the portion of weeds and out-worn faces." In Mr. Lloyd's youthful drama even the dissipated Marchioness, who tempts and yields to temptation, is made to play a noble part in the end, won back from sin by generous feeling and strong sense: and the description of Julia Villeneuve's tender care of her mother is so characteristic of the author, that I cannot help quoting a part of it here, though it is not among the powerful parts of the play.

Describing how her aged parent's extreme infirmity rendered her incapable, without a sacrifice, of leaving the small dwelling to which she had been accustomed, and how this had prevented her even from hinting her lover's proposal for their union, Julia says,

> "Though blind
> She loved this little spot. A happy wife

There lived she with her lord. It was a home
In which an only brother, long since dead,
And I, were educated: 'twas to her
As the whole world. It's scanty garden plot,
The hum of bees hived there, which still she heard
On a warm summer's day, the scent of flowers,
The honey-suckle which trailed round it's porch,
It's orchard, field, and trees, her universe!—
I knew she could not long be spared to me.
Her sufferings, when alleviated best,
Were most acute: and I could best perform
That sacred task. I wished to lengthen out,—
By consecrating to her every moment,—
Her being to myself! &c."

"Could I leave her?—
I might have seen her,—such was D'Ormond's plea—
Each day. But who her evening hours could cheer?
Her long and solitary evening hours?—
Talk her, or haply sing her, to her sleep?
Read to her? Smooth her pillow? Lastly make
Morning seem morning with a daughter's welcome?
For morning's light ne'er visited her eyes!—
Well! I refused to quit her! D'Ormond grew
Absent, reserved, nay splenetic and petulant!
He left the Province, nor has he once sent
A kind enquiry so t' alleviate
His heavy absence."

*Beritola* is Italian in form, as much as Wieland's *Oberon*, but the spirit is that of the Englishman, Charles Lloyd; it contains the same vivid descriptions of mental suffering, the same reflective display of the lover's passion, the same sentiments of deep domestic tenderness, uttered as from the heart and with a special air of reality, as *The Duke D'Ormond* and the author's productions in general. The versification is rather better than that of his earlier poems, but the want of ease and harmony in the flow of the verse is a prevailing defect in Mr. Lloyd's poetry, and often makes it appear prosaic, even where the thought is not so.

This pathetic sonnet is one of a very interesting set, on the death of Priscilla Farmer, the author's maternal grandmother, included in the joint volume:

" Oh, She was almost speechless! nor could hold
Awakening converse with me! (I shall bless
No more the modulated tenderness
Of that dear voice!) Alas, 'twas shrunk and cold
Her honour'd face! yet, when I sought to speak,
Through her half-open'd eyelids She did send
Faint looks, that said, " I would be yet thy friend!"
And (O my chok'd breast!) e'en on that shrunk cheek
I saw one slow tear roll! my hand She took,
Placing it on her heart—I heard her sigh
" 'Tis too, too much!" 'Twas Love's last agony!
I tore me from Her! 'Twas her latest look,
Her latest accents—Oh my heart, retain
That look, those accents, till we meet again!" S. C.

## CHAPTER IV.

(From Mr. Wordsworth's Stanzas written in my Pocket-copy of Thomson's *Castle of Indolence*.)

" With him there often walked in friendly guise,
Or lay upon the moss by brook or tree,
A noticeable Man with large grey eyes,
And a pale face that seemed undoubtedly
As if a blooming face it ought to be;
Heavy his low-hung lip did oft appear,
Deprest by weight of musing Phantasy;
Profound his forehead was, though not severe;
Yet some did think that he had little business here:

" Sweet heaven forefend! his was a lawful right:
Noisy he was, and gamesome as a boy;
His limbs would toss about him with delight,
Like branches when strong winds the trees annoy.
Nor lacked his calmer hours device or toy
To banish listlessness and irksome care;
He would have taught you how you might employ
Yourself; and many did to him repair,—
And certes not in vain; he had inventions rare."

FOR Josiah Wade, the gentleman to whom the letters, placed at the beginning of the last chapter, were written, the fine portrait of Mr. Coleridge by Allston, (nearly full length, in oils,) was painted at Rome in 1806,—I believe

in the spring of that year. Mr. Allston himself spoke of it, as in his opinion faithfully representing his friend's features and expression, such as they commonly appeared. His countenance, he added, in his high poetic mood, was quite beyond the painter's art: "it was indeed *spirit made visible.*"

Mr. Coleridge was thirty-three years old when this portrait was painted, but it would be taken for that of a man of forty. The youthful, even boyish look, which the original retained for some years after boyhood, must rather suddenly have given place, to a premature appearance, first of middle-agedness, then of old age, at least in his general aspect, though in some points of personal appearance,—his fair smooth skin and "large grey eyes," "at once the clearest and the deepest"—so a friend lately described them to me,—"that I ever saw," he grew not old to the last. Serjeant Talfourd thus speaks of what he was at three or four and forty. "Lamb used to say that he was inferiour to what he had been in his youth; but I can scarcely believe it; at least there is nothing in his early writing which gives any idea of the richness of his mind so lavishly poured out at this time in his happiest moods. Although he looked much older than he was, his hair being silvered all over, and his person tending to corpulency, there was about him no trace of bodily sickness or mental decay, but rather an air of voluptuous repose. His benignity of manner placed his auditors entirely at their ease; and inclined them to listen delighted to the sweet low tone in which he began to discourse on some high theme. At first his tones were conversational: he seemed to dally with the shallows of the subject and with fantastic images which bordered it: but gradually the thought grew deeper, and the voice deepened with the thought; the stream gathering strength, seemed to bear along with it all things which opposed its progress, and blended them with its current; and stretching away among regions tinted with etherial colours, was lost at airy distance in the horizon of fancy. Coleridge was sometimes induced to repeat portions of *Christabel*, then enshrined in manuscript from eyes profane, and gave a bewitching effect to its wizard lines. But

more peculiar in its beauty than this was his recitation of Kubla Khan. As he repeated the passage—

> A damsel with a dulcimer
> In a vision once I saw:
> It was an Abyssinian maid,
> And on her dulcimer she played
> Singing of Mount Abora!

his voice seemed to mount and melt into air, as the images grew more visionary, and the suggested associations more remote."

Mr. Dequincey thus describes him at thirty-four, in the summer season of 1807, about a year and a half after the date of Mr. Allston's portrait.

"I had received directions for finding out the house where Coleridge was visiting; and in riding down a main street of Bridgewater, I noticed a gateway corresponding to the description given me. Under this was standing, and gazing about him, a man whom I shall describe. In height he might seem to be above five feet eight: (he was in reality about an inch and a half taller, but his figure was of an order which drowns the height;) his person was broad and full, and tended even to corpulence: his complexion was fair, though not what painters technically style fair, because it was associated with black hair: his eyes were large and soft in their expression: and it was from the peculiar appearance of haze or dreaminess, which mixed with their light, that I recognised my object. This was Coleridge. I examined him steadfastly for a minute or more: and it struck me that he saw neither myself nor any other object in the street. He was in a deep reverie, for I had dismounted, made two or three trifling arrangements at an inn door, and advanced close to him, before he had apparently become conscious of my presence. The sound of my voice, announcing my own name, first awoke him; he started, and for a moment, seemed at a loss to understand my purpose or his own situation; for he repeated rapidly a number of words which had no relation to either of us. There was no *mauvaise honte* in his manner, but simple perplexity, and an apparent difficulty in recovering his position among daylight realities. This

little scene over, he received me with a kindness of manner so marked that it might be called gracious.

Coleridge led me to a drawing room and rang the bell for refreshments, and omitted no point of a courteous reception. He told me that there would be a very large dinner party on that day, which perhaps might be disagreeable to a perfect stranger; but, if not, he could assure me of a most hospitable welcome from the family. I was too anxious to see him, under all aspects, to think of declining this invitation. And these little points of business being settled, Coleridge, like some great river, the Orellana, or the St. Lawrence, that had been checked and fretted by rocks or thwarting islands, and suddenly recovers its volume of waters, and its mighty music, swept, at once, as if returning to his natural business, into a continuous strain of eloquent dissertation, certainly the most novel, the most finely illustrated, and traversing the most spacious fields of thought, by transitions, the most just and logical, that it was possible to conceive."

I will now present him as he appeared to William Hazlitt in the February of 1798, when he was little more than five and twenty; and this brings him back to the period of his life at which the present Memoir concludes.

"It was in January, 1798, that I rose one morning before daylight, to walk ten miles in the mud, to hear this celebrated person preach. Never, the longest day I have to live, shall I have such another walk as this cold, raw, comfortless one, in the winter of the year 1798. *Il y a des impressions que ni le temps ni les circonstances peuvent effacer. Dusse-je vivre des siècles entiers, le doux temps de ma jeunesse ne peut renaître pour moi, ni s'effacer jamais dans ma mémoire.* When I got there, the organ was playing the hundredth psalm, and when it was done, Mr. Coleridge rose and gave out his text. "He departed again into a mountain *himself alone.*" As he gave out this text his voice 'rose like a stream of rich distilled perfumes;' and when he came to the two last words, which he pronounced loud, deep, and distinct, it seemed to me, who was then young, as if the sounds had echoed from the bottom of the human heart, and as if that prayer might have floated in solemn silence through the universe. The

idea of St. John came into my mind, of one crying in the wilderness, who had his loins girt about, and whose food was locusts and wild honey. The preacher then launched into his subject, like an eagle dallying with the wind. The sermon was upon peace and war—upon church and state—not their alliance, but their separation—on the spirit of the world, and the spirit of Christianity, not as the same, but as opposed to one another. He talked of those who had inscribed the cross of Christ on banners dripping with human gore. He made a poetical and pastoral excursion,—and to shew the fatal effects of war, drew a striking contrast between the simple shepherd boy, driving his team afield, or sitting under the hawthorn, piping to his flock, as though he should never be old, and the same poor country lad, crimped, kidnapped, brought into town, made drunk at an alehouse, turned into a wretched drummer-boy, with his hair sticking on end with powder and pomatum, a long cue at his back, and tricked out in the finery of the profession of blood.

'Such were the notes our once loved poet sung:'

and for myself, I could not have been more delighted if I had heard the music of the spheres. Poetry and Philosophy had met together, Truth and Genius had embraced, under the eye and with the sanction of Religion. This was even beyond my hopes. I returned home well satisfied. The sun that was still labouring pale and wan through the sky, obscured by thick mists, seemed an emblem of the *good cause;* and the cold dank drops of dew, that hung half melted on the beard of the thistle, had something genial and refreshing in them."

A glowing dawn was his, but noon's full blaze
Of *perfect day* ne'er fill'd his heav'n with radiance.
Scarce were the flow'rets on their stems upraised
When sudden shadows cast an evening gloom
O'er those bright skies!—yet still those skies were lovely;
The roses of the morn yet lingered there
When stars began to peep,—nor yet exhaled
Fresh dew-drops glittered near the glowworm's lamp,
And many a snatch of lark-like melody
Birds of the shade trilled forth 'mid plaintive warbling.

## CHAPTER V.

"Learning, power, and time,
(Too much of all) thus wasting in vain war
Of fervid colloquy. *Sickness, 'tis true,*
*Whole years of weary days, besieged him close,*
*Even to the gates and inlets of his life!*
But it is true, no less, that strenuous, firm,
And with a natural gladness, he maintained
The citadel unconquered, and in joy
Was strong to follow the delightful Muse."

WITH the letter of Nov. 5, which concludes Chapter III. the biographical sketch left by Mr. Coleridge's late Editor comes to an end, and at the present time I can carry it no further than to add, that in January, 1798, my Father removed with his wife and child, the latter then four months' old, to a cottage at Stowey, which was his home for three years; that from that home, in company with Mr. and Miss Wordsworth, he went, in September, 1798, to Germany, and that he spent fourteen months in that country, during which period the Letters called Satyrane's were written. Here, however, at the end of this brief personal record, I may best introduce the remarks which have been made, and details which have been given, respecting Mr. Coleridge's services to *The Morning Post* and *The Courier*, spoken of by him in Vol. I. Chap. X. That representation has been excepted against by Mr. Stuart, who was Editor of the former Paper when my Father wrote for it, and half proprietor of the other. The view which he takes of the case he has already made public;[1] he seems to be of opinion, that the language used by Mr. Coleridge in this work is calculated to give an impression of the amount of

[1] In articles on *Mr. Coleridge, the Poet, and his Newspaper writings, &c.* in the *Gentleman's Magazine* of May, June, July, August of 1838.

his actual performances on behalf of those papers beyond what the facts warrant; I have not thought it necessary or proper to withdraw that portion of Chapter X. of the first volume, of which he complains, nor do I see that it must necessarily bear a construction at variance with his own statements: but neither would I republish it, without giving Mr. Stuart's account of matters to which it refers, extracted from letters written by him to Mr. Coleridge's late Editor. He writes as follows from Wykham Park, on the 7th of October, 1835.

"In August, 1795, I began to conduct *The Morning Post*, the sale of which was so low, only 350 per day, that a gentleman at that time made a bet with me that the Paper was actually extinct.

"At Christmas, 1797, on the recommendation of Mr. Mackintosh, Coleridge sent me several pieces of poetry; up to the time of his going to Germany, about 12 pieces.[2] Prose writing I never expected from him at that time. He went to Germany in the summer of 1798.

"He returned, I believe, about the end of 1799,[3] and proposed to me to come to London to reside near me, and write daily for the paper. I took lodgings for him in King Street, Covent Garden. *The Morning Post* then selling 2,000 daily. Coleridge wrote some things, particularly, I remember, Comments on Lord Grenville's reply to Buonaparte's Overtures of Peace, in January, 1800. But he totally failed in the plan he proposed of writing daily on the daily occurrences."

Mr. Stuart then gives three short letters of Mr. C.'s, shewing how often he was ill and incapable of writing for the paper, and the beginning of a long one dated Greta Hall,

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[2] "Short pieces," Mr. Stuart calls them in the Gent's. Mag. But among them was *France*, an ode, which was first published in the M. P. in the beginning of 1798, and republished in the same Paper some years afterwards, and must have helped to give it a decent poetical reputation, I think.

[3] Nov. 27, 1799.

Keswick, 19th July, 1800, in which he promises a second part of Pitt and Buonaparte, but speaks of it as uncertain whether or no he should be able to continue any regular species of employment for Mr. S.'s paper.

After noting that Mr. C. left London at the end of his first half year's engagement, Mr. S. brings forward more letters, containing excuses on account of illness, but promising a number of essays: two on the war, as respecting agriculture; one on the raising of rents; one on the riots (corn riots in 1800); and one on the countenance by Government of calumnies on the King;—promising also a second part of Pitt and Buonaparte, which Mr. S. supposes he was constantly dunning for, the Character of Pitt, published in The M. P. early in 1800, having made a great sensation; proposing a letter to Sir F. Burdett on solitary imprisonment, and that all these should be published in pamphlets, after they had been divided into pieces, and published in the M. P., he doubting whether they were of value for a newspaper. Some of these essays appear to have been sent; it is not specified which or how many.

"Early in 1807," Mr. S. says, "I was confined by a violent fever. Several weeks I was delirious, and to my astonishment, when I recovered, Pitt was out of place, and Horne Tooke in Parliament. I did not resume the conduct of the Paper till the spring. The Paper suffered loss."

The next letter, dated May, 1801, Keswick, speaks of ill health, and "the habits of irresolution which are its worst consequences," forbidding him to rely on himself. Mr. S. had solicited him to write, and offered terms, and it appears that he did form a new engagement for the Paper about that time. In a letter of Sept. 1801, he says, "I am not so blinded by authorship as to believe that what I have done is at all adequate to the money I have received." Mr. Stuart then produces a letter with the postmark Bridgewater, of Jan. 19, 1802. These letters shew, he says, that in July and October 1800, in May 1801, on the 30th of September 1801, Coleridge was at Keswick, that in January 1802, he was at Stowey, that he could not therefore have materially contributed to the success of *The Morning Post*. "In this last year," says

Mr. Stuart, "his Letters to Judge Fletcher, and on Mr. Fox, at Paris, were published." The former were not published till 1814. The six letters appeared in *The Courier* on Sept. 20th, 29th, Oct. 21st, Nov. 2nd, Dec. 3rd, 6th, 9th and 10th. The latter appeared on the 4th and 9th of Nov. 1802. Mr. Stuart speaks of it as a mistake in those who have supposed that the coolness of Fox to Sir James Mackintosh was occasioned by his ascribing this "violent philippic," as Lamb called it, to him (Sir James). "On those to Judge Fletcher," he says, "and many other such essays, as being rather fit for pamphlets than newspapers, I did not set much value. On this subject hear Coleridge himself in a letter dated June 4th, 1811, when he was engaged with Mr. Street. "Freshness of effect belongs to a newspaper and distinguishes it from a literary book: the former being the Zenith and the latter the Nadir, with a number of intermediate degrees, occupied by pamphlets, magazines, reviews, &c. Besides, in a daily paper, with advertisements proportioned to its large sale, what is deferred must four times in five be extinguished. A newspaper is a market for flowers and vegetables, rather than a granary or conservatory; and the drawer of its Editor a common burial ground, not a catacomb for embalmed mummies, in which the defunct are preserved to serve in after times as medicines for the living." This freshness of effect Coleridge scarcely ever gave to either *The Morning Post* or *The Courier*. He was occasionally in London during my time, in *The Morning Post* it is true, but he never gave the daily bread. He was mostly at Keswick. * * * * A few months in 1800, and a few weeks in 1802, that was all the time he ever wasted on *The Morning Post*, and as for *The Courier*, it accepted his proffered services as a favour done to him," &c.

After speaking again of the former paper, he says, "I could give many more reasons for its rise than those I gave in my former letter, and among others I would include Coleridge's occasional writings, though to them I would not set down more than one hundreth part of the cause of success, much as I esteemed his writings and much as I would have given for a regular daily assistance by him. But he

never wrote a thing I requested, and, I think I may add, he never wrote a thing I expected. In proof of this he promised me at my earnest and endless request, the character of Buonaparte, which he himself, at first of his own mere motion, had promised; he promised it letter after letter, year after year, for ten years (last for *The Courier*), yet never wrote it. Could Coleridge and I place ourselves thirty-eight years back, and he be so far a man of business as to write three or four hours a day, there is nothing I would not pay for his assistance. I would take him into partnership," (which, I think, my Father would have declined,) "and I would enable him to make a large fortune. To write the leading paragraph of a newspaper I would prefer him to Mackintosh, Burke, or any man I ever heard of. His observations not only were confirmed by good sense, but displayed extensive knowledge, deep thought and well grounded foresight; they were so brilliantly ornamented, so classically delightful. They were the writings of a Scholar, a Gentleman and a Statesman, without personal sarcasm or illiberality of any kind. But when Coleridge wrote in his study without being pressed, he wondered and lost himself. He should always have had the printer's devil at his elbow with "Sir, the printers want copy."

"So far then with regard to *The Morning Post*, which I finally left in August, 1803. Throughout the last year, during my most rapid success, Coleridge did not, I believe, write a line for me. Seven months afterwards I find Coleridge at Portsmouth, on his way to Malta." Mr. Stuart proceeds to state that Mr. C. returned to England in the summer of 1806, that in 1807 he was engaged with his Play at Drury Lane Theatre, early in 1808 gave his lectures at the Royal Institution, at the end of that year began his plan of *The Friend*, which took him up till towards the end of 1809—in 1811 proposed to write for *The Courier* on a salary. Mr. Stuart mentions that the Essays on the Spaniards were sent in the end of 1809 by Mr. Coleridge, as some return for sums he had expended on his account, not on his (Mr. Stuart's) solicitation. He says that Mr. C. wrote in *The Courier* for his own convenience, his other literary pro-

jects having failed, and that he wrote for it against the will of Mr. Street, the Editor, who, in accepting his services, only yielded to his (Mr. S's.) suggestion. "*The Courier*," he says, "required no assistance. It was, and had long been, the evening paper of the highest circulation." In another letter, dated 7th September, 1835, he speaks thus: "*The Courier* indeed sold 8000 daily for some years, but when Street and I purchased it at a good price in June, 1799, it sold nearly 2000, and had the reputation of selling more. It was the apostasy of *The Sun* in 1803, Street's good management, its early intelligence, and the importance of public events, that raised *The Courier*." In the same letter he says, "Could Coleridge have written the leading paragraph daily his services would have been invaluable, but an occasional essay or two could produce little effect. It was early and ample accounts of domestic occurrences, as Trials, Executions, &c. &c., exclusively early Irish news; the earliest French news; full Parliamentary Debates; Corn Riots in 1800; Procession proclaiming Peace; the attack on the King by Hatfield at the Theatre; the arrest of Arthur O'Connor, respecting which I was examined at the Privy Council: it was the earliest and fullest accounts of such things as these, while the other papers were negligent, that raised *The Morning Post* from 350, when I took it in August, 1795, to 4500, when I sold it in August, 1803, and then no other daily morning paper sold above 3000. It was unremitting attention and success in giving the best and earliest accounts of occurrences that made *The Morning Post*, and not the writings of any one, though good writing is always an important feature. I have known the Paper served more by a minute, picturesque, lively account of the ascension of a balloon than ever it was by any piece of writing. There is a great difference among newspapers in this respect. Most of the Sunday Papers, calling themselves *News*papers, have no news, only political essays, which are read by the working-classes, and which in those papers produce astonishing success." In other letters he says: "The reputation of the writings of any man, the mere reputation of them, would not serve, or in the very slightest degree serve, any daily

newspaper." "Mackintosh's reputation as a political writer was then much higher than that of Coleridge, and he was my brother-in-law, known to have written for the Paper, especially during one year (1795-6), and to be on good terms with me, yet I must confess that even to the reputation of his writing for the Paper I never ascribed any part of its success."

It does not appear from Mr. Stuart how many essays in all Mr. Coleridge contributed to the Morning Post and the Courier. Mr. C. himself mentions several in the tenth chapter of Vol. I. of this work. All these have been copied, and will be republished hereafter. I happen to possess also his contributions to *The Courier* in 1811. They are numerous, though not daily; if what I have form the complete set for that year, which I have now no means of ascertaining. The Critique on *Bertram* first appeared in that Paper, I believe in 1816. Mr. Stuart admits that some of the poems published by Mr. C. in *The Morning Post* before his going to Germany made a "great impression:" that on Mr. C.'s proposing "personally on the spot and by daily exertion to assist him in the conduct of the Paper," he "grasped at the engagement," and "no doubt solicited" him "in the most earnest manner to enter upon it;" that his "writings produced a greater effect in *The Morning Post* than any others." In his letter of September, 19, 1835, Mr. S. says "The most remarkable things Coleridge published in *The Morning Post* were *The Devil's Thoughts* and the *Character of Pitt*. Each of these made a sensation, which any writings unconnected with the news of the day rarely did." Elsewhere he says, "Several hundred sheets extra were sold by them, and the paper was in demand for days and weeks afterwards. Coleridge promised a pair of portraits, Pitt and Buonaparte. I could not walk a hundred yards in the streets but I was stopped by inquiries, 'When shall we have Buonaparte?' One of the most eager of these inquirers was Dr. Moore, author of *Zeluco*." In the letter mentioned just above he says "At one time Coleridge engaged to write daily for *The Courier* on the news of the day, and he did attend very regularly and wrote; but as it was in the spring, when the

Paper was overwhelmed with debates and advertisements, (and Street always preferring news, and a short notice of it in a leading paragraph to any writing however brilliant,) little or nothing that he wrote was inserted from want of room. Of this he repeatedly complained to me, saying that he would not continue to receive a salary without rendering services. I answered, 'Wait till Parliament is up; we shall then have ample room, and shall be obliged to you for all you can give us.' When Parliament rose Coleridge disappeared, or at least discontinued his services."

The time here spoken of was in June, 1811. In April he had proposed to Mr. Stuart a particular plan of writing for *The Courier*, and on May 5, he writes to that gentleman, that he had stated and particularized this proposal to Mr. Street, and "found a full and in all appearance a warm assent." Mr. Street, he says, "expressed himself highly pleased both at the thought of my assistance in general, and with the specific plan of assistance. There was no doubt, he said, that it would be of great service to the Paper."

Mr. Stuart has been offended by Mr. Coleridge's saying that he "employed the prime and manhood of his intellect in these labours," namely for the Papers; that they "added nothing to his fortune or reputation;" that the "industry of the week supplied the necessities of the week." This he has considered as a reproach to himself, and an unjust one. It was not—Mr. Stuart himself saw that it was not—so intended; Mr. Coleridge's only object was to shew that he had not altogether suffered his talents to "rust away without any efficient exertion for his own good or that of his fellow-creatures;" that he had laboured more than would appear from the number and size of the books he had produced, and in whatever he wrote had aimed not merely to supply his own temporal wants, but to benefit his readers by bringing high principles in view. "For, while cabbage-stalks rot in dunghills," says he, in a letter to the late Editor of *The Morning Post*, "I will never write what, or for what, I do not think right. All that prudence can justify is not to write what at certain times one may yet think." But Mr. Stuart thought that the Public would draw inferences from Mr. C.'s language injurious to himself, though it was not meant of him;

and hence he gave the details which I have thought it right to bring forward. I have no doubt that Mr. Coleridge had an exaggerated impression of the amount of his labours for *The Morning Post* and *The Courier*, and that when he said that he had raised the sale of the former from a low number to 7000 daily, he mistook the sale of the latter, which, Mr. Stuart admits, may have been 7000 per day in 1811, when he wrote for it constantly, with that of *The Morning Post*, which never sold above 4500. Mr. Stuart says truly "Coleridge had a defective memory, from want of interest in common things;" and of this he brings forward a strong instance. I think my Father's example and experience go to prove that Newspaper reading must ever be more or less injurious to the public mind; high and careful writing for the daily journal will never answer: who could furnish noble views and a refined moral commentary on public events and occurrences every day of the week, or even every other day, and obtain a *proportionate* recompense? On the other hand, a coarse or low sort of writing on the important subjects, with which the journal deals, must do mischief. No one will deny that the character of Mr. C.'s articles was such as he has described; he would naturally be more alive to marks of the impression made by what he wrote in particular than any one else, even the Editor; and men are apt to judge of their labours by intensity as much as by quantity. He perhaps expended more thought on some of those essays, of which Mr. Street and even Mr. Stuart thought lightly, than would have served to furnish a large amount of ordinary serviceable matter. Mr. Stuart observes, "He never had a prime and manhood of intellect in the sense in which he speaks of it in the *Lit. Biography*. He had indeed the great mind, the great powers, but he could not use them for the press with regularity and vigour.[4] He was always ill." This may have

[4] "He never could write a thing that was immediately required of him," says Mr. S., in the Gentleman's Magazine, of May, 1838. "The thought of compulsion disarmed him. I could name other able literary men in this unfortunate plight." One of the many grounds of argument against the sole *profession* of literature.

been true; yet it was during what ought to have been the best years of his life that he wrote for the Papers, and doubtless what he did produce helped to exhaust his scanty stock of bodily power, and to prevent him from writing as many books as he might have done, had circumstances permitted him to use his pen, not for procuring "the necessities of the week," but in the manner most congenial to his own mind, and ultimately most useful to the public. "Such things as *The Morning Post* and money," says Mr. S., in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, "never settled upon his mind." I believe that such things *unsettled* his mind, and made him, as the lampooner said, with a somewhat different allusion, "Like to a man on double business bound, who both neglects." This was a trouble to himself and all connected with him. *Le ciel nous vend toujours les biens qu'il nous prodigue*, may be applied to my poor Father emphatically.

In regard to the remuneration he received, I do not bring forward the *particulars* given by Mr. Stuart of his liberal dealing with Mr. Coleridge, simply because the rehearsal of them would be tedious, and could answer no end. Such details may be superseded by the general declaration, that I believe my Father to have received from Mr. Stuart far more than the market value of his contributions to the Papers which that gentleman was concerned in. Mr. Stuart says that he "paid at the time as highly as such writings were paid for," and to Mr. Coleridge's satisfaction, which my Father's own letters certainly testify; and concludes the account of sums advanced by him to Mr. C., when he was not writing for the paper, by saying that he had "at least 700*l.* of him beside many acts of kindness." A considerable part of this was spent on stamps and paper for *The Friend;* two hundred of it was given after the publication of the *Biographia Literaria*.

Mr. Coleridge expressed his esteem for Mr. Stuart and sense of his kindness very strongly in letters to himself, but not more strongly than to others. He speaks of him in a letter written about the beginning of 1809, addressed to a gentleman of the Quaker persuasion at Leeds, as "a man of

the most consummate knowledge of the world, managed by a thorough strong and sound judgment, and rendered innocuous by a good heart"—as a "most wise, disinterested, kind, and constant friend." In a letter to my Mother, written on his return from Malta, he says, "Stuart is a friend, and a friend indeed."

I have thought it right to bring forward these particulars, —(I and those equally concerned with myself)—not only out of a regard to truth and openness, that the language of this work respecting *The Morning Post* and *The Courier* may not be interpreted in any way contrary to fact, which, I think, it *need* not be; but also in gratitude to a man who was serviceable and friendly to my Father during many years of his life; who appreciated his merits as a prose writer when they were not generally known and acknowledged; and by whose aid his principal prose work, *The Friend*, was brought before the public. I do not complain in the least of his stating the facts of my Father's newspaper writings; in the *manner* in which this was done—as was pointed out at the time—there *was* something to complain of. Let me add that I consider his representation of my Father's feelings on certain occasions altogether incredible, and deeply regret these pieces of bad construing, dictated by resentment, in one who was once so truly his friend.

My Father certainly does not assert, as Mr. Stuart represents him as having asserted in the *Literary Biography*, that he "made the fortunes of *The Morning Post* and *The Courier*, and was inadequately paid." He speaks of his writings as having been in furtherance of *Government*. I have no doubt he thought that they were serviceable to Government and to his country, and that while they brought upon him the enmity of the anti-ministerial and Buonapartean party, and every possible hindrance to his literary career which the most hostile and contemptuous criticism of a leading journal could effect, they were unrewarded in any other quarter. There was truth in one half of Hazlitt's sarcasm, "his politics turned—*but not to account.*" "From Government, or the friends of Government!" says Mr.

Stuart, "Why, Coleridge was attacking Pitt and Lord Grenville in 1800, who were at the head of the Government. In 1801, when the Addingtons came *into* power, he wrote little or nothing in *The Morning Post;* in the autumn of 1802 he wrote one or two able essays against Buonaparte in relation to the Peace of Amiens, and he published in that paper, at that time, a letter or two to Judge Fletcher." This last sentence is a double mistake, as I have already shewn. "At that time the newspaper press generally condemned the conduct of Buonaparte in the severest manner; and no part of it more severely than *The Morning Post* by my own writings. Cobbett attacked Fox, &c., but *The Morning Post* was the most distinguished on this subject, and the increase of its circulation was great. The qualified opposition to Government was not given to Pitt's ministry, but to Addington's. To Pitt *The Morning Post* was always, in my time, decidedly opposed. I supported Addington against Buonaparte, during the Peace of Amiens, with all my power, and in the summer of 1803 Mr. Estcourt came to me with a message of thanks from the prime minister, Mr. A. offering anything I wished. I declined the offer. It was not till the summer of 1804, a year after I had finally left *The Morning Post* that, in *The Courier*, I supported Pitt against Buonaparte, on the same grounds I had supported Mr. Addington, Pitt having become again prime minister, to protect Lord Melville against the fifth clause. Coleridge confuses things. The qualified support of the ministry, he alludes to, applies wholly to *The Courier*." I do not see the material discrepancy between this statement and my Father's, when he says that *The Morning Post* was "*anti-ministerial*, indeed, but with far greater earnestness and zeal, both anti-jacobin and anti-gallican," and that it proved a far more useful ally to the Government in its most important objects, in consequence of its being generally considered moderately *anti-ministerial*, than if it had been the avowed eulogist of *Mr.* Pitt; "that the rapid increase in the sale of *The Morning Post* is a pledge that genuine impartiality with a respectable portion of literary talent will secure the success of a newspaper *without ministerial patronage*," and that from "the *commencement of the Addington administration*"

whatever he himself had written "in *The Morning Post* or *Courier* was in defence of Government." In the preceding paragraph he argues that neither Mr. Percival nor "the present administration" pursued the plans of Mr. Pitt.

In what degree my Father's writings contributed to the reputation and success of *The Morning Post* cannot at this distance of time be *precisely* settled. It must indeed be difficult to say what occasions success in such enterprises, if Mr. Stuart's own brother could attribute that of *The Morning Post* to Sir James Mackintosh, "though with less reason even than if he had ascribed it to Coleridge." The long story told to shew that booksellers were not aware of Mr. C.'s having produced any effect on the paper, and when they set up a rival journal, never cared to obtain his services, but eagerly secured those of Mr. Stuart's assistant, George Lane, does not quite decide the question; for booksellers, though, as Mr. Stuart says, "knowing men" in such matters, are not *omniscient* even in what concerns their own business. If the anti-gallican policy of *The Morning Post* "increased its circulation," I cannot but think that the influence of my Father's writings, though not numerous, and indirectly of his intercourse with the Editor,—who rates his conversational powers as highly as it is usual to rate them—in directing the tone and determining the principles of the paper, must have served it materially. I believe him to have been the anti-gallican *spirit* that governed *The Morning Post*, though he may not have performed as much of the *letter* as he fancied.

I shall conclude this subject with quoting part of a letter of my Father's on the subject of *The Courier*, to which Mr. Stuart, to whom it was addressed, declares himself to have replied, that "as long as he actively interfered, the Paper was conducted on the independent principles alluded to by Coleridge," but that, for reasons which he states, he found it best, from the year 1811, to "leave Street entirely to his own course;" and "so it gradually slid into a mere ministerial journal—an instrument of the Treasury:" "acquired a high character for being the organ of Government, and obtained a great circulation; but became odious to the mob—excited by the falsehoods of the weekly journals."

" Wednesday, 8th May, 1816.
" James Gillman's, Esq. Surgeon,
" MY DEAR STUART, Highgate.

" SINCE you left me, I have been reflecting a great deal on the subject of the Catholic question, and somewhat on *The Courier* in general. With all my weight of *faults*, (and no one is less likely to underrate them than myself,) a tendency to be influenced by selfish motives in my friendships, or even in the cultivation of my acquaintance, will not, I am sure, be by *you* placed among them. When we first knew each other, it was perhaps the most interesting period of both our lives, at the very turn of the flood; and I can never cease to reflect with affectionate delight on the steadiness and independence of your conduct and principles, and how, for so many years, with little assistance from others, and with one main guide, a sympathizing tact for the real sense, feeling, and impulses of the *respectable* part of the English nation, you went on so auspiciously, and likewise so *effectively*. It is far, very far, from being an hyperbole to affirm, that you did more against the French scheme of Continental domination than the Duke of Wellington has done; or rather, Wellington could neither have been supplied by the Ministers, nor the Ministers supported by the nation, but for the tone first given, and then constantly kept up by the plain, un-ministerial, anti-opposition, anti-Jacobin, anti-Gallican, anti-Napoleon spirit of your writings, aided by a colloquial style and evident good sense, in which, as acting on an immense mass of knowledge of existing men and existing circumstances, you are superiour to any man I ever met with in my life-time. Indeed you are the only human being, of whom I can say with severe truth, that I never conversed with you for an hour without rememberable instruction; and with the same simplicity I dare affirm my belief, that my greater knowledge of *man* has been useful to you, though, from the nature of things, not so useful as your knowledge of *men* has been to me."

" Now, with such convictions, my dear Stuart, how is it possible that I can look back on the conduct of *The Courier*, from the period of the Duke of York's restoration, without some pain? You cannot be seriously offended or affronted

with me, if, in this deep confidence and in a letter, which, or its contents, can meet no eye but your own, I venture to declare, that though since then much has been done, very much of high utility to the country, by and under Mr. Street, yet *The Courier* itself has gradually lost that sanctifying spirit which was the life of its life, and without which, even the best and soundest principles lose half their effect on the human mind; I mean, the faith in the *faith* of the person and paper which brings them forward. They are attributed to the *accident* of their happening to be for such a side, or for such a party. In short, there is no longer any *root* in the paper, out of which all the various branches and fruits, and even fluttering leaves, are seen or believed to grow. But it is the old tree, barked round above the root, though the circular decortication is so small and so neatly filled up and coloured as to be scarcely visible but in its effects, excellent fruit still hanging on the boughs, but they are tied on by threads and hairs."

"In all this I am well aware, that you are no otherwise to be blamed than in permitting that which, without disturbance to your heart and tranquillity, you could not, perhaps, have prevented or effectively modified. But the whole plan of Street seems to me to have been motiveless from the beginning, or at least affected by the grossest miscalculations, in respect even of pecuniary interests. For, had the paper maintained and asserted not only its independence, but its appearance of it;—it is true that Mr. Street might not have had Mr. A. to dine with him, or received as many nods and shakes of the hand from Lord this or that; but at least equally true, that the ministry would have been far more effectively served, and that, (I speak from facts), both the paper and its conductor would have been held by the adherents of ministers in far higher respect; and after all, ministers do not *love* newspapers in their hearts, not even those that support them; indeed it seems epidemic among Parliament men in general to affect to look down upon and despise newspapers, to which they owe $\frac{999}{1000}$ of their influence and character, and at least $\frac{1}{2}$ths of their knowledge and phraseology. Enough! burn the letter, and forgive the writer, for the purity and affectionateness

of his motive."—Quoted from the Gentleman's Magazine of June, 1838.

One other point connected with Mr. C.'s writing for public journals I must advert to before concluding this chapter. Mr. Cottle finds want of memory in some part of the narrative, contained in this work, respecting the publication of *The Watchman;* it is as well to let him tell the story in his own way, which he does as follows. "The plain fact is, I purchased the whole of the paper for *The Watchman*, allowing Mr. C. to have it at prime cost, and receiving small sums from Mr. C. occasionally, in liquidation. I became responsible, also, with Mr. B. for printing the work, by which means, I reduced the price per sheet, as a bookseller, (1000) from fifty shillings to thirty-five shillings. Mr. C. paid me for the paper in fractions, as he found it convenient, but from the imperfection of Mr. Coleridge's own receipts, I never received the whole. It was a losing concern altogether, and I was willing, and did bear, uncomplaining, my portion of the loss. There is some difference between this statement, and that of Mr. Coleridge, in his *Biographia Literaria.* A defect of memory must have existed, arising out of the lapse of twenty-two years; but my notices, made at the time, did not admit of mistake. There were but twenty sheets in the whole ten numbers of *The Watchman*, which, at thirty-five shillings per sheet, came to only thirty-five pounds. The paper amounted to much more than the printing.

"I cannot refrain from observing further, that my loss was augmented from another cause. Mr. C. states in the above work, that his London publisher never paid him 'one farthing,' but 'set him at defiance.' I also was more than his equal companion in this misfortune. The thirty copies of Mr. C.'s poems, and the six '*Joans of Arc*' (referred to in the preceding letter) found a ready sale, by this said 'indefatigable London publisher,' and large and fresh orders were received, so that Mr. Coleridge and myself successively participated in two very opposite sets of feeling; the one of exultation that our publications had found *so good a sale;* and the other of *depression*, that the time of *payment* never arrived!"

I take this opportunity of expressing my sense of many kind acts and much friendly conduct of Mr. Cottle towards my Father, often spoken of to me by my dear departed Mother, into whose heart all benefits sunk deep, and by whom he was ever remembered with respect and affection. If I still regard with any disapproval his publication of letters exposing his friend's unhappy bondage to opium and consequent embarrassments and deep distress of mind, it is not that I would have wished a broad influencive fact in the history of one, whose peculiar gifts had made him in some degree an object of public interest, to be finally concealed, supposing it to be attested, as this has been, by clear unambiguous documents. I agree with Mr. Cottle in thinking that he would himself have desired, even to the last, that whatever benefit the world might obtain by the knowledge of his sufferings from opium,—the calamity which the *unregulated* use of this drug had been to him—into which he first fell ignorantly and innocently, (not as Mr. Dequincey has said, to restore the "riot of his animal spirits," when "youthful blood no longer sustained it," but as a relief from bodily pain and nervous irritation)—that others might avoid the rock, on which so great a part of his happiness for so long a time was wrecked; and this from the same benevolent feeling, which prompted him earnestly to desire that his body should be opened after his death, in the hope that some cause of his life-long pains in the region of the bowels might be discovered, and that the knowledge thus obtained might lead to the invention of a remedy for like afflictions. Such a wish indeed, on the former point, as well as afterwards on the latter, he once strongly expressed; but I believe myself to be speaking equally in his spirit when I say, that all such considerations of advantage to the public should be subordinated to the prior claims of private and natural interests. My own opinion is, that it is the wiser and better plan for persons connected with those, whose feats of extraordinary strength have drawn the public gaze upon them, to endure patiently that their frailties should be gazed and wondered at too; and even if they think, that any reflection to them of such celebrity, on such conditions, is far more to be deprecated than desired, still to consider that they are not per-

mitted to determine their lot, in this respect, but are to take it as it has been determined for them, independently of their will, with its peculiar pains and privileges annexed to it. I believe that most of them would be like the sickly queen in the fairy tale of Peronella, who repented when she had obtained the country maiden's youth and health at the loss of rank and riches. Be this as it may, they have not a choice of evils, nor can exchange the aches and pains of their portion, or its wrinkles and blemishes,—for a fair and painless obscurity. These remarks, however, refer only to the feeling and conduct of parties privately affected by such exposures. Others are bound to care for them as they are not bound to care for themselves. If a finished portrait of one, in whom they are nearly concerned, is due to the world, they alone can be the debtors, for the property by inheritance is in them. Other persons, without their leave, should not *undertake* to give any such portrait; *their* duties move on a different plane; nor can they rightfully feel themselves "*entitled*" (to borrow the language of Mr. Dequincey, while I venture to dissent from his judgment), "to notice the most striking aspects of his character, of his disposition and his manners,—as so many reflex indications of his intellectual constitution," if this involves the publication of letters on private subjects, the relation of domestic circumstances and other such personalities affecting the living. I am sure at least that conscience would prohibit *me* from any such course. I should never think the public good a sufficient apology for publishing the secret history of any man or woman whatever, who had connections remaining upon earth; but if I were possessed of private notices respecting one in whom the world takes an interest, should think it right to place them in the hands of his nearest relations, leaving it to them to deal with such documents, as a sense of what is due to the public, and what belongs to openness and honesty, may demand.

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Of all the censors of Mr. Coleridge, Mr. Dequincey is the one whose remarks are the most worthy of attention; those of the rest in general are but views taken from a distance, and filled up by conjecture, views taken through a medium

so thick with *opinion*, even if not clouded with vanity and self-love, that it resembles a horn more than glass or the transpicuous air;—The Opium eater, as he has called himself, had sufficient inward sympathy with the subject of his criticism to be capable in some degree of beholding his mind, as it actually existed, in all the intermingling shades of individual reality; and in few minds have these shades been more subtly intermingled than in my Father's. But Mr. Dequincey's portrait of Coleridge is not the man himself; for besides that his knowledge of what concerned him outwardly was imperfect, the inward sympathy of which I have spoken was far from entire, and he has written as if it were greater than it really was. I cannot but conjecture, from what he has disclosed concerning himself, that on some points he has seen Mr. Coleridge's mind *too much* in the mirror of his own. His sketches of my Father's life and character are, like all that he writes, so finely written, that the blots on the narrative are the more to be deplored. One of these blots is the passage to which I referred at the beginning of the last paragraph; "I believe it to be notorious that he first began the use of opium, not as a relief from any bodily pains or nervous irritations—for his constitution was strong and excellent—but as a source of luxurious sensations. It is a great misfortune, at least it is a great pain, to have tasted the enchanted cup of youthful rapture incident to the poetic temperament. Coleridge, to speak in the words of *Cervantes*, wanted better bread than was made with wheat." Mr. Dequincey mistook a constitution that had vigour in it for a vigorous constitution. His body was originally full of life, but it was full of death also from the first; there was in him a slow poison, which gradually leavened the whole lump, and by which his muscular frame was prematurely slackened and stupified. Mr. Stuart says that his letters are "one continued flow of complaint of ill health and incapacity from ill health." This is true of all his letters—(all the *sets* of them)—which have come under my eye, even those written before he went to Malta, where his opium habits were confirmed. Indeed it was in search of health that he visited the Mediterranean,—for one in his condition of nerves

a most ill-advised measure,—I believe that the climate of South Italy is poison to most persons who suffer from relaxation and tendency to low fever. If my Father sought more from opium than the mere absence of pain, I feel assured that it was not luxurious sensations or the glowing phantasmagoria of passive dreams; but that the power of the medicine might keep down the agitations of his nervous system, like a strong hand grasping the jangled strings of some shattered lyre,—that he might once more lightly flash along

> " Like those trim skiffs, unknown of yore,
> On winding lakes and rivers wide,
> That ask no aid of sail or oar,
> That fear no spite of wind or tide,"—

released, for a time at least, from the tyranny of ailments, which, by a spell of wretchedness, fix the thoughts upon themselves, perpetually drawing them inwards, as into a stifling gulf. A letter of his has been given in this Supplement, which records his first experience of opium: he had recourse to it in that instance for violent pain in the face, afterwards he sought relief in the same way from the suffering of rheumatism.

I shall conclude this chapter with a poetical sketch drawn from my Father by a friend, who knew him during the latter years of his life, after spending a few days with him at Bath, in the year 1815.[6]

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[6] The passage belongs to him as far as "heart's deep fervency." It concluded, when first written, with a reference to the unhappy thraldom of his powers, of which I have been speaking; for at that time, says the writer, in a private communication, "he was not so well regulated in his habits and labours afterwards." The verses are from a *Rhymed Plea for Tolerance*: in two dialogues, by John Kenyon. I wish that I had space to quote the sweet lines that follow, relating to the author's own character and feelings, and his childhood passed "in our Carib isle." They do justice to Mr. Kenyon's humility and cheerfulness, in what they say of himself, but not to his powers.

" Proud lot is his, whose comprehensive soul,
Keen for the parts, capacious for the whole,
Thought's mingled hues can separate, dark from bright,
Like the fine lens that sifts the solar light;
Then recompose again th' harmonious rays,
And pour them powerful in collected blaze—
Wakening, where'er they glance, creations new,
In beauty steeped, nor less to nature true;
With eloquence that hurls from reason's throne
A voice of might, or pleads in pity's tone:
To agitate, to melt, to win, to soothe,
Yet kindling ever on the side of truth;
Or swerved, by no base interest warped awry,
But erring in his heart's deep fervency;
Genius for him asserts the unthwarted claim,
With these to mate——the sacred Few of fame—
Explore, like them, new regions for mankind,
And leave, like theirs, a deathless name behind."

## CHAPTER VI.

"By what I *have* effected, am I to be judged by my fellow-men; what I *could* have done is a question for my own conscience."—S. T. C.

AS the *Biographia Literaria* does not mention all Mr. Coleridge's writings, it will be proper, in conclusion, to give some account of them here.

The Poetical Works in three volumes include the *Juvenile Poems, Sibylline Leaves, Ancient Mariner, Christabel, Remorse, Zapolya*, and *Wallenstein*.

The first volume of Juvenile Poems was published in the Spring of 1796. It contains three sonnets by Charles Lamb, and a poetical Epistle which he called "Sara's," but of which my Mother told me she wrote but little. Indeed it is not very like some simple affecting verses, which were wholly by herself, on the death of her beautiful infant, Berkeley, in 1799. In May, 1797, Mr. C. put forth a collection of poems, containing all that were in his first edition, with the

exception of twenty pieces and the addition of ten new ones and a considerable number by his friends, Lloyd and Lamb. *The Ancient Mariner, Love, The Nightingale, The Foster Mother's Tale* first appeared with the *Lyrical Ballads* of Mr. Wordsworth in the summer of 1798. There was a third edition of the *Juvenile Poems* by themselves in 1803, with the original motto from Statius, *Felix curarum*, &c. *Silo.. Lib.* iv. A spirit of almost child-like sociability seemed to reign among these young poets—they were fond of joint publications.

*Wallenstein*, a Play translated from the German of Schiller, appeared in 1800. *Christabel* was not published till April 1816, but written, the first part at Stowey in 1797, the second at Keswick in 1800. It went into a third edition in the first year. The fragment called *Kubla Khan*, composed in 1797, and the *Pains of Sleep*, which was annexed to the former by way of contrast, were published with the first edition of *Christabel*, in 1816.

The Tragedy called *Remorse* was written in the summer and autumn of 1797, but not represented on the stage till 1813, when it was performed at Drury Lane—on the authority of an old play-bill of the Calne Theatre, "with unbounded applause thirty successive nights." On "the success of the *Remorse*," Mr. Coleridge wrote thus to his friend Mr. Poole, on the 14th of February, 1813:

"The receipt of your heart-engendered lines were sweeter than an unexpected strain of sweetest music;—or in humbler phrase, it was the only pleasurable sensation which the *success of the Remorse* has given me. I have read of, or perhaps only imagined, a punishment in Arabia, in which the culprit was so bricked up as to be unable to turn his eyes to the right or to the left, while in front was placed a high heap of barren sand glittering under the vertical sun. Some slight analogue of this, I have myself suffered from the mere unusualness of having my attention forcibly directed to a subject which permitted neither sequence of imagery, nor series of reasoning. No grocer's apprentice, after his first month's permitted riot, was ever sicker of figs and raisins than I of hearing about the *Remorse*. The end-

less rat-a-tat-tat at our black-and-blue bruised door, and my three master fiends, proof sheets, letters (for I have a raging epistolophobia), and worse than these—invitations to large dinners, which I cannot refuse without offence and imputation of pride, nor accept without disturbance of temper the day before, and a sick aching stomach for two days after—oppress me so that my spirits quite sink under it.

"I have never seen the Play since the first night. It has been a good thing for the Theatre. They will get 8,000*l.* or 10,000*l.* by it, and I shall get more than all my literary labours put together, nay, thrice as much, subtracting my heavy losses in *The Watchman* and *The Friend*, including the copyright."

The manuscript of the *Remorse*, immediately after it was written, was shewn to Mr. Sheridan, "who," says my Father, in the Preface to the first Edition, "by a twice conveyed recommendation (in the year 1797) had urged me to write a Tragedy for his theatre, who, on my objection that I was utterly ignorant of all stage tactics, had promised that *he* would himself make the necessary alterations, if the piece should be at all representable." He however neither gave him any answer, nor returned him the manuscript, which he suffered to wander about the town from his house, and my Father goes on to say, "not only asserted that the Play was rejected because I would not submit to the alteration of one ludicrous line, but finally, in the year 1806, amused and delighted (as who was ever in his society, if I may trust the universal report, without being amused and delighted?) a large company at the house of a highly respectable Member of Parliament, with the ridicule of the Tragedy, as a *fair specimen* of the *whole* of which he adduced a line:

"Drip! drip! drip! there's nothing here but dripping."[7]

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[7] A certain fair poetess, *encore resplendissante de beauté*, if she ever casts her eye on this page, will take no offence at its contents, nor will her filial feelings quarrel angrily with mine. The "dripping," whatever its unction may once have been, is stale enough now; but the story has freshness in it yet. Such neg-

"In the original copy of the Play, in the first scene of the fourth act, Isidore *had* commenced his soliloquy in the cavern with the words:

"Drip! drip! a ceaseless sound of water-drops,"—

as far as I can at present recollect: for, on the possible ludicrous association being pointed out to me, I instantly and thankfully struck out the line." I repeat this story as told by Mr. C. himself, because it has been otherwise told by others. I have little doubt that it was more pointedly than faithfully told to him, and can never believe that Mr. S. represented a ludicrous line as a fair specimen of the whole Play, or his tenacious adherence to it as the reason for its rejection. I dare say he thought it, as Lord Byron afterwards thought *Zapolya*, "beautiful but not practicable." Mr. Coleridge felt that *he* had some claim to a friendly spirit of criticism in that quarter, because he had "devoted the firstlings of his talents," as he says in a marginal note, "to the celebration of Sheridan's genius,"[8] and after the treatment described "not only never spoke unkindly or resentfully of it, but actually was zealous and frequent in defending and praising his public principles and conduct in the Morning Post"—of which, perhaps, Mr. S. knew nothing. However, in lighter moods, my Father laughed at Sheridan's joke as much as any of his auditors could have done

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lects as that of Mr. S. in not returning the M.S. of *Remorse* are always excusable in public men of great and various occupation; but the lesson to the literary aspirant is just the same as if he had been ever so blameable. My Father's whole history is a lesson to the professors of literature, and that which relates to the *Remorse* is a small but significant part of it, teaching patience and hope, while it may serve to repress the expectation, that money and credit can soon and certainly be obtained, even by writers possessed of genius not wholly unaccompanied with popular ability, and who have been favoured with an introduction to some of the leaders and guides of the public, men of taste and talent and general influence.

[8] See his Sonnet to Sheridan. Poet. Works, I. p. 65.

in 1806, and repeated with great effect and mock solemnity "Drip!—Drip!—Drip!—nothing but dripping." I suppose it was at this time,—the winter of 1806-7—that he made an unsuccessful attempt to bring out the Tragedy at Drury Lane.

When first written this Play had been called Osorio, from the principal character, whose name my Father afterwards improved into Ordonio. I believe he in some degree altered, if he did not absolutely recast, the three last acts after the failure with Mr. Sheridan, who probably led him to see their unfitness for theatrical representation. But of this point I have not certain knowledge. It was when Drury Lane was under the management of Lord Byron and Mr. Whitbread, and through the influence of the former, that it was produced upon the stage. Mr. Gillman says, "Although Mr. Whitbread did not give it the advantage of a single new scene, yet the popularity of the Play was such, that the principal actor, (Mr. Roe,) who had performed in it with great success, made choice of it for his benefit night, and it brought an overflowing house." This was some time after Mr. Coleridge took up his residence at Highgate, in April, 1816. After all I am happy to think that this drama is a strain of *poetry*, and like all, not only dramatic poems, but highly poetic dramas, not to be fully appreciated on the stage.

*Zapolya*[9] came before the public in 1817. The stage fate of this piece is alluded to in the B. L. Mr. Gillman mentions that it was Mr. Douglas Kinnaird, then the critic for Drury Lane, who rejected the Play, and complained of its "metaphysics"—a term which is not, upon all occasions, to be strictly construed, but, when used in familiar talk, seems merely to denote whatever is too fine-spun, in the texture of thought and speech, for common wear; whatever is not readily apprehensible and generally acceptable.

[9] An important error in punctuation has crept into the later editions of *Zapolya*. In a speech of Sarolta, Act III. Scene I., the note of admiration is placed after "visitations," at the end of line 22; whereas it should be placed at the end of line 21, after "morsel of bread." Poet. Works, II. p. 314.

Schoolboys call everything in books or discourse, which is graver or tenderer than they like, "*metaphysics.*" Mr. Kinnaird may have judged quite rightly that the Play was too *metaphysical* for our theatres in their present state, though certainly plays as metaphysical were once well received on the stage. *Zapolya*, however, had a favourable audience from the public as a dramatic poem. Mr. Gillman says this Christmas Tale, which the author "never sat down to write, but dictated while walking up and down the room, became so immediately popular that 2000 copies were sold in six weeks."

The collection of poems entitled *Sibylline Leaves*, "in allusion to the fragmentary and widely scattered state in which they had been long suffered to remain," appeared in 1817, about the same time with *Zapolya*, the *Biographia Literaria*, and the first *Lay Sermon*.

The *Miscellaneous Poems* were composed at different periods of the author's life, many of them in his later years. I believe that *Youth and Age* was written before he left the North of England in 1810, when he was about seven or eight-and-thirty,—early indeed for the poet to say of himself

> "I see these locks in silvery slips,
> This drooping gait, this altered size:
> But spring-tide blossoms on thy lips,
> And tears take sunshine from thine eyes."

The whole of the *Poetical Works*, with the exception of a few which must be incorporated in a future edition, are contained in that in three volumes. *The Fall of Robespierre*, an Historic drama, of which the first act was written by Mr. Coleridge, and published September 22, 1794, is printed in the first vol. of the *Lit. Remains*. This first act contains the Song on *Domestic Peace*. In the blank verse there are some faint dawnings of his maturer style, as in these lines:—

> "The winged hours, that scatter'd roses round me,
> Languid and sad, drag their slow course along,
> And shake big gall-drops from their heavy wings"—

and in these :—

" Why, thou hast been the mouth-piece of all horrors,
And, like a blood-hound, crouch'd for murder ! Now
Aloof thou standest from the tottering pillar,
Or, like a frighted child behind its mother,
Hidest thy pale face in the skirts of—*Mercy!*"

but it contains scarcely anything of his peculiar original powers, and some of the lines are in schoolboy taste; for instance,

" While sorrow sad, like the dank willow near her,
Hangs o'er the troubled fountain of her eye."

Yet three years after the date of this composition, in 1797, which has been called his *Annus Mirabilis*, he had reached his poetical zenith. But perhaps it may be said that, from original temperament, and the excitement of circumstances, my Father lived fast.

He had four poetical epochs, which represented, in some sort, boyhood, youthful manhood, middle age, and the decline of life. The first commenced a little on this side childhood, when he wrote *Time real and Imaginary*, and ended in 1796. This period embraces the Juvenile Poems, concluding with *Religious Musings*, written on the Christmas Eve of 1794, a few months after *The Fall of Robespierre*: *The Destiny of Nations* was composed a little earlier. *Lewti*, written in 1795, *The Æolian Harp*, and *Reflections on having left a place of Retirement*, written soon after, are more finished poems, and exhibit more of his peculiar vein than any which he wrote before them; though one poet, Mr. Bowles, has said that he never surpassed the *Religious Musings! Fire, Famine, and Slaughter* belongs to 1796. *The Lines to a Friend* (Charles Lamb) *who had declared his intention of writing no more poetry*, and those *To a Young Friend* (Charles Lloyd,) were composed in the same year. These poems of 1794-5-6 may be considered intermediate in power as in time, and so forming a link between the first epoch and the next.

Then came his poetic prime, which commenced with the

*Ode to the Departing Year*, composed at the end of December, 1796. The year following, the five-and-twentieth of his life, produced *he Ancient Mariner*, *Love*, and *The Dark Ladie*, the first part of *Christabel*, *Kubla Khan*, *Remorse*, in its original cast, *France*, and *This Lime-tree bower*. *Tears in Solitude*, *The Nightingale*, and *The Wanderings of Cain*, were written in 1798. *Frost at Midnight*, *The Picture*, the *Lines to the Rev. G. Coleridge*, and those *To W. Wordsworth*, are all of this same Stowey period. It was in June, 1797, that my Father began to be intimate with Mr. Wordsworth, and this doubtless gave an impulse to his mind. The *Hymn before Sunrise*, and other strains produced in Germany, link this period to the next. The *Hexameters written during a temporary blindness*, and the *Catullian Hendecosyllables* (which are freely translated from Matthisson's *Milesisches Mährchen*,) Mr. Cottle seems to place in 1797, but the Author has marked the former as produced in 1799, and I believe that the latter are of the same date. The *Night Scene*, *Myrtle leaf that ill besped*, *Maiden that with sullen brow*, are of this period, and so I believe are *Lines composed in a concert-room*, and some others.

The poems which succeed are distinguished from those of my Father's Stowey life by a less buoyant spirit. Poetic fire they have, but not the clear bright mounting flame of his earlier poetry. Their meditative vein is graver, and they seem tinged with the sombre hues of middle age; though some of them were written before the Author was thirty-five years old. A characteristic poem of this period is *Dejection*, an Ode: composed at Keswick, April 4, 1802. *Wallenstein* had been written in London in 1800. *The Three Graves* was composed in 1805 or 6; the second part of *Christabel*[9] soon after the Author's settling in the Lake

[9] *Christabel* was condemned by the Edinburgh Review in good company, that of *The White Doe*. The two poems might be compared to Salm's two Leonoras, which seem the beautiful personification of sunshine and of pensive shadow. None of my Uncle (Mr. Southey's) Laureate Odes, not even that beautiful one on the death of the Princess Charlotte, shall form a

country, (in 1801;) *Youth and Age* not long before he quitted it as a residence for ever, (in 1810.) *Recollections of Love* must have been written on his return to Keswick from Malta in 1806: *The Happy Husband* at that time, or earlier. The small fragment called *The Knight's Tomb* probably belongs to the North. *The Devil's Thoughts* appeared in *The Morning Post* in 1800. This production certainly has in it more of youthful sprightliness than of middle-aged soberness; still it is less fantastic and has more of world-wisdom in its satire than the *War Eclogue* of 1796. The *Complaint and Reply* first appeared in 1802. The *Ode to Tranquillity* was published in *The Friend*, March 1809.

The poems of his after years, even when sad, are calmer in their melancholy than those produced while he was ceasing to be young. We are less heavy-hearted when youth is out of sight than when it is taking its leave. *Duty surviving Self Love*, *The Pang more sharp than all*, *Love's Apparition and Evanishment*, *The Blossoming of the solitary Date tree*, and some other poems of his latter years, have this character of resigned and subdued sadness. *Work without Hope* was written at fifty-six. The *Visionary Hope* and *The Pains of Sleep*, which express more agitation and severer suffering, are of earlier date. These and all in the *Sibylline Leaves* were written before the end of 1817, when he had completed his forty-fifth year. The productions of the fourth epoch, looked at as works of imagination, are tender, graceful, exquisitely finished, but less bold and animated than those of his earlier day. This may be said of *Zapolya*, *Alice du Clos*, *The Garden of Boccaccio*, *The two Founts*, *Lines suggested by the last Words of Berengarius*, *Sancti Dominici Pallium*, and other poems written, I believe, when

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bird with these, but let *Thalaba* come to join the lovely pair, and then we shall have the three Graces.

It is curious to look at critical articles, full of furious ridicule and buffoonery, in any old reviewing journal; they remind one so of fossil porcupines, with quills fixed in rigidity, or harlequin snakes in bottles.—N.B. Most of these snakes are of the blind worm species.

the poet was past forty, the four last-named after he was fifty years old. *Love, Hope, and Patience in Education* was, I think, one of his latest poetical efforts, if not the very last.

The following prose compositions are included in the poetical volumes, and the *Apologetic Preface* to *Fire, Famine, and Slaughter*, containing a comparison between Milton and Jeremy Taylor, is placed at the end of Vol. I: *An Allegoric Vision*, first published in *The Courier* in 1811, and *New Thoughts on Old Subjects*, which first appeared in *The Keepsake*, are inserted in Vol. II.

The whole of the Poetical Works, except a few which have been reprinted in the *Literary Remains*, are contained in the stereotyped edition in three volumes. The Poems without the Dramas have been collected in a single volume, from which some of the Juvenile Poems, and two or three of later date, are excluded, and which includes a few not contained in the three vol. edition.

I now proceed to Mr. Coleridge's compositions in Prose. *Conciones ad Populum*, are two addresses to the People, delivered at the latter end of February, and then thrown into a small pamphlet. "After this," says Mr. Cottle, "he consolidated two other of his lectures, and published them under the title of *The Plot Discovered.*" A moral and political Lecture delivered at Bristol by Mr. C. was published in the same year. I do not know whether he printed any of his other Bristol orations of the year ninety-five. *The Watchman* was carried on in 1796. The first number appeared March 1; the tenth and last, May 13. These were youthful immature productions. Whatever was valuable and of a permanent nature in them was transferred into his later productions, or included in later publications.

*The Friend*, a Literary, Moral, and Political Weekly Paper, excluding personal and party politics and the events of the day, was written and published at Grasmere. The first number appeared on Thursday, June 1st, 1809, the 27th and last of that edition, March 15, 1810. *The Friend* next appeared before the public in 3 vols. in 1818. This was "rather a rifacimento," as the Author said, "than a new edition, the additions forming so large a proportion of the whole work, and the arrangement being altogether new."

(Essays V-XIII. pp. 38-128, treat of the *Duty of communicating truth, and the conditions under which it may be safely communicated;* Essay V. is *on the inexpediency of pious frauds, &c.*) The third edition of 1837 gave the Author's last corrections, an appendix containing the parts thrown out in the recast, with some other *miscellanea*, and a synoptical table of the contents by the Editor. There is now a fourth edition.

The two *Lay Sermons* were published, the one in 1816, the other in 1817. The first is entitled *The Statesman's Manual*, or *The Bible the best Guide to Political skill and foresight*: a Lay Sermon addressed to the higher classes of society, with an Appendix, containing comments and essays connected with the study of the inspired writings:—the second *A Lay Sermon*, addressed to the Higher and Middle Classes, on the existing distresses and discontents. Mr. Gillman says he "had the intention of addressing a third to the lower classes."

The *Biographia Literaria* was published in 1817, but parts of the first volume must have been composed some years earlier. The Edinburgh Review in its August number of that year was as favourable to the book *as could be expected.*[10]

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[10] The remarks in that article upon my Father's remarks on *poetic diction* I have vainly tried to understand:—"a paste of rich and honeyed words, like the candied coat of the auricula, a glittering tissue of quaint conceits and sparkling metaphors, crusting over the rough stalk of homely thoughts; &c. such is the style of Pope and Gray; such very often is that of Shakespeare and Milton; and, notwithstanding Mr. Coleridge's decision to the contrary, of Spenser's *Faëry Queen*." *Homely* thoughts clothed in a glittering tissue of poetic diction are but pseudo-poetry; and the powder on the auricula would be nothing, if the coat itself were not of velvet. Mr. C.'s decision respecting the *Faëry Queen* is equally misrepresented, for he maintains that Spenser's language *is* distinct from that of prose, such language being required by his thoughts and in harmony with them. To say that he decided "the contrary," as if he had denied poetic diction to Spenser, is not like the auricula's coat, *candid*.

The *Aids to Reflection* first appeared in 1825. The original title was Aids to Reflection in the formation of a manly character on the several grounds of Prudence, Morality, and Religion; illustrated by select passages from our elder divines, especially from Archbishop Leighton. In an advertisement to the first edition, the Author mentions that the work was proposed and begun as a mere selection from the writings of Leighton, with a few notes and a biographical preface by the selector, but underwent a revolution of plan and object. "It would, indeed," he adds, "be more correct to say, that the present volume owed its accidental origin to the intention of compiling one of a different description than to speak of it as the same work." "Still, however, the selections from Leighton, which will be found in the fundamental and moral sections of this work, and which I could retain consistently with its present form and matter, will, both from the intrinsic excellence and from the characteristic beauty of the passages, suffice to answer two prominent purposes of the original plan; that of placing in a clear light the principle which pervades all Leighton's writings,—his sublime view, I mean, of Religion and Morality as the means of reforming the human soul in the Divine Image (*Idea*); and that of exciting an interest in the works, and an affectionate reverence for the name and memory of this severely tried and truly primitive Churchman."

Neither Hume nor Clarendon, I believe, mentions the persecution of Archbishop Leighton's father by the Prelatical party of his day; and yet it was one of their worst acts, and that which most excited wrath and indignation against the Primate—so faithful is their portrait of those times! Never can I read Mr. Wordsworth's sublime sonnet to Laud, especially the lines,

> Prejudged by foes determined not to spare,
> An old weak man for vengeance laid aside,

without thinking of another "old weak man for vengeance laid aside"—of Laud in the day of his power pulling off his hat and thanking God for the inhuman sentence that had been passed upon the already wasted victim [11]—of the mi-

[11] The particulars of this instance of Star Chamber tyranny

serable den to which the mangled man was committed for life after that sentence had been executed in all its multiplication and precision of barbarity—then calling to mind the words of our Saviour, *They that take the sword shall perish with the sword*, and *Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy*. It was not *mercy* alone that was violated by these acts—but law and justice; and if he who instigated and rejoiced in them received neither justice nor mercy in his turn, is he worthy of the sacred name of *Martyr*? May we not say that the *vengeance* which fell upon this persecutor was the Lord's vengeance, even if it came to pass by evil instruments, and fell upon a head already bowed down, and in some respects a noble one? Can the *glory and honour* of meeting death with firmness,—nay even with "sublime" piety, cast its beams backward and bathe in one pure luminous flood a life darkened with such deep shadows, as those that chequer the sunshine of Laud's career?—the parts really brightened with the light of heaven? Plainness, sincerity, integrity, learning, munificence to a cause[12]—can virtues like these outweigh or neutralize such faults of head, heart, and temper, as lie to the charge of this Bishop in the church of Christ? As well might we set the cold bright morning dews, that rest on the stony crown of Vesuvius, against the burning lava that bursts from its crater, and expect them to quench the fire or reduce it to a moderate heat. *Some* abatement must be made from the guilt of his violences from consideration of the *times;* but to subtract the whole on that account, or even to make light of it, is surely too much to make moral good and evil dependent on

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I read in Aikman's Life of Archbishop Laud, prefixed to his works. It is said that when he was taken out of the wretched cell in Newgate in which he was confined before his sentence, "*the skin and hair had almost wholly come off his body.*" This was for writing against *Prelacy*, not against Christianity. Any man may do the like now and not a hair of his head can be touched; yet *moral* offences, public or private, have far less chance of escaping with impunity than they had then.

[12] Clarendon, *passim*, especially his summary of Laud's character.

circumstance. What? Have Arundel, Bonner, Gardiner little or nothing to answer for? Was there ever yet a persecutor that persecuted from mere *speculative* inhumanity? Even through Clarendon's account we may discern, I think, that Laud's private passions, in part at least, engaged him in the cause of Intolerance. He had been exasperated, before he attained power, by Puritan molestations and oppositions,—he became the persecutor of Puritans after he attained it; as schoolboys that have been tormented while they were in a low form, torment in their turn when they get into a high one,—not their tormentors but unfortunates who represent them to their imagination. An eminently good and wise man is above his *times*, if not in all, yet in many things; but Laud was the very impersonation of his times—the impersonated spirit of his age and his party. (Compare his over ceremonious consecration of St. Catherine's Church, gloated over by Hume, with Archdeacon Hare's remarks on his neglect of his diocese, in *The Mission of the Comforter.*) They who are of that party still, who would still swathe religion by way of supporting it, and dizen by way of dressing it, and gaze with fond regretful admiration upon the giant forms of Spiritual Despotism and Exaggerated Externalism, as they loom shadowy and magnificent through the vapoury vista of ages, to them no wonder that he is a giant too. And there are others, far above that or any other *party*, who in their love and zeal for the Church, abstract the how and the why of Laud's public warfare, and see him abstractedly as the Champion of the Church of England. "God knows my heart," says Mr. Coleridge, (in a marginal note on Mr. Southey's article on the History of Dissenters, in the Quarterly Review of October 1813,) "how bitterly I abhor *all* intolerance, how deeply I pity the actors when there is reason to suppose them deluded; but is it not clear that this theatrical scene of Laud's death, who was the victim of almost national indignation, is not to be compared with 'bloody sentences' in the coolness of secure power? As well might you palliate the horrible atrocities of the Inquisition, every one of which might be justified on the same grounds that Southey has here de-

fended Laud, by detailing the vengeance taken on some of the Inquisitors." I do not see that *here* my honoured Uncle *defends* the Primate: he says, "We are not the apologists of Laud; in some things he was erroneous, in some imprudent, in others culpable. Evil, which upon the great scale is ever made conducive to good, produces evil to those by whom it comes." And how wise and beautiful is this sentiment a little further on! "It especially behoves the historian to inculcate charity, and take part with the oppressed, whoever may have been the oppressors."

As some excuse for my Father's expression, "theatrical scene," I allege that sentence of Laud's; "Never did man put off mortality with a better courage, nor look upon his bloody and malicious enemies with more Christian charity." My Father adds: "I know well how imprudent and unworldly these my opinions are. The Dissenters will give me no thanks, because I prefer and extol the *present* Church of England, and the partizans of the Church will calumniate me, because I condemn particular members, and regret particular æras, of the *former* Church of England. Would that Southey had written the *whole* of his review in the spirit of this beautiful page." (Page 102.) In that very interesting collection of meditative Sonnets by the late Sir Aubrey de Vere is one upon Laud, against which I ventured to write, "If *anything* done in the name of principle must needs be righteous, then the tortures and long languishing of Leighton are no impeachment of Laud's righteousness." There was a second edition of the *Aids* in 1831, a fifth in 1843.

The little work *On the Constitution of the Church and State*,[13] according to the Idea of each, first appeared in 1830, and went into a second edition in the same year. It is now joined with the *Lay Sermons* in one volume. To the *Church and State* are appended *Notes on Taylor's History of Enthusiasm*, and *A Dialogue between Demosius and Mystes*.

[13] The inaccurate report of Niebühr's opinion of this work, which appeared in a letter of Dr. Arnold, published in his Life, has been corrected, I am told, in a new edition.

After Mr. Coleridge's death in July 1834, four volumes of his *Literary Remains* were published by his late Editor. Vols. I. and II. appeared in 1836, Vol. III. in 1838, Vol. IV. in 1839. Vol. I. contains *The Fall of Robespierre* and other poems, and poetical fragments, Notes of a Course of Lectures delivered in 1818, Marginal Notes on several books, Fragments of Essays, Mr. C.'s Contributions to the Omniana of Mr. Southey, published in 1812, and fifty-six other short articles on various subjects. Vol. II. contains more Notes of Lectures on Shakespeare, including criticism on each of his Plays, with Introductory Matter on Poetry, the Drama, and the Stage, prefaced by extracts of letters relating to these Lectures: Notes on Ben Jonson, on Beaumont and Fletcher, on Fuller, on Sir Thomas Browne, an Essay on the Prometheus of Æschylus, and other miscellaneous writings.

Vol. III. contains *Formula Fidei de S. Trinitate*, A Nightly Prayer, Notes on the Book of Common Prayer, on Hooker, Field, Donne, Henry More, Heinrichs, Hacket, Jeremy Taylor, The Pilgrim's Progress, and John Smith, and a Letter to a Godchild.

Vol. IV. contains Notes on Luther, St. Theresa, Bedell, Baxter, Leighton, Sherlock, Waterland, Shelton, Andrew Fuller, Whitaker, Oxlee, A Barrister's Hints, Davison, Irving, and Noble, and an Essay on Faith. The present edition of the Literary Remains is nearly exhausted. In a fresh edition new matter will be added from marginal notes, probably in a fifth volume. Archdeacon Hare speaks of *The Remains* in the Preface to his *Mission of the Comforter* in a passage which may fitly be produced here.

"Of recent English writers, the one with whose sanction I have chiefly desired, whenever I could, to strengthen my opinions, is the great religious philosopher to whom the mind of our generation in England owes more than to any other man. My gratitude to him I have endeavoured to express by dedicating the following Sermons to his memory; and the offering is so far at least appropriate, in that the main work of his life was to spiritualize, not only our philosophy, but our theology, to raise them both above the empiricism

into which they had long been dwindling, and to set them free from the technical trammels of logical systems. Whether he is as much studied by the genial young men of the present day, as he was twenty or thirty years ago, I have no adequate means of judging; but our theological literature teems with errors, such as could hardly have been committed by persons whose minds had been disciplined by his philosophical method, and had rightly appropriated his principles. So far too as my observation has extended, the third and fourth volumes of his *Remains*, though they were hailed with delight by Arnold on their first appearance, have not yet produced their proper effect on the intellect of the age. It may be that the rich store of profound and beautiful thought contained in them, has been weighed down, from being mixt with a few opinions on points of Biblical criticism, likely to be very offensive to persons who know nothing about the history of the Canon. Some of these opinions, to which Coleridge himself ascribed a good deal of importance, seem to me of little worth; some, to be decidedly erroneous. Philological criticism, indeed, all matters requiring a laborious and accurate investigation of details, were alien from the bent and habits of his mind; and his exegetical studies, such as they were, took place at a period when he had little better than the meagre Rationalism of Eickhorn and Bertholdt to help him. Of the opinions which he imbibed from them, some abode with him through life. These, however, along with everything else that can justly be objected to in the *Remains*, do not form a twentieth part of the whole, and may easily be separated from the remainder. Nor do they detract, in any way, from the sterling sense, the clear and farsighted discernment, the power of tracing principles in their remotest operations, and of referring all things to their first principles which are manifested in almost every page, and from which we might learn so much."

The last posthumous work of Mr. Coleridge, published September, 1840, is entitled *Confessions of an Inquiring Spirit*, and consists of seven letters on the Inspiration of the Scriptures. It should be understood that this work is in-

tended *not to undermine the belief that the Bible is the Word of God*, or in any degree to lessen the deep reverence with which it is regarded by Christians, but to put that belief on a better foundation than it commonly rests upon. "Let it be distinctly understood," the author says, "that my arguments and objections apply exclusively to the following Doctrine or Dogma. To the opinions which individual divines have advanced in lieu of this doctrine,"—for instance, I suppose, the strange fancy that the *words* of the Bible are not divinely dictated, that the language is human and yet exempt, by divine power, from any possible admixture of human error,—"my only objection, as far as I object, is—that I do not understand them.——I said that in the Bible there is more that *finds* me than I have experienced in all other books put together; that the words of the Bible find me at greater depths of my being; and that whatever finds me brings with it an irresistible evidence of its having proceeded from the Holy Spirit. But the Doctrine in question requires me to believe, that not only what finds me, but that all that exists in the sacred volume, which I am bound to find therein, was not alone inspired by, that is, composed by men under the actuating influence of the Holy Spirit, but likewise—dictated by an infallible intelligence;—that the writers, each and all, were divinely informed as well as inspired.————————I can conceive no softenings here which would not nullify the Doctrine, and convert it to a cloud for each man's fancy to shape and shift at will. And this doctrine, I confess, plants the vineyard of the word with thorns for me, and places snares in its pathways." He proceeds to shew how the doctrine in question injures the true idea of the spirituality and divinity of the sacred volume, and directly or indirectly tends to alienate men from the outward Revelation. A second edition of this little work will soon be prepared.

The book has been denounced in strange style by some who do not profess to have read it. These reasoners assume in the first place that both the tendency and object of it is to overthrow Christianity—whereas any one who reads *it*, and not merely what a hostile spirit has predetermined to

find in it, cannot fail to perceive that at least the writer's *object* is to guard and exalt the religion of Christ. But, secondly, forgetting that the book is intended to overthrow Christianity, they urge that Christianity has done very well hitherto without such views as it propounds, and that very great thinkers and good men have lived and died, in the faith and fear of the Lord, without the knowledge of them;—as if the wants of the Church were in all ages exactly alike; or as if there had not been in all ages clouds over the sunshine of faith, occasioned by the difficulties which the writer seeks to remove; or as if it were not true that the more light men obtain on one side of the region of thought the more they need on other sides; as if greatness and goodness, in their application to men, were not relative terms, and the best and wisest of mortals, that have appeared upon earth, had ever been free from error and imperfection! I should think there is hardly a foolish or evil notion on any subject which might not be screened from attack by such arguments as these. And, even were they not such mere weakness, of what force can they be with those, who take for their motto, as Mr. Coleridge did from first to last: *That all men may know the truth* and that *the truth may set them free*? Religious truth and religion are identified in Scripture, or at least represented as one and inseparable; and how can a man obey the truth or minister to it, except by setting forth, what, after the widest survey of the subject which he is capable of taking, *he believes to be the truth*?

The suggestion that no man should examine such subjects or call in question prevailing views in religion save one who starts from a high station of holiness and spiritual light, can be of little value unless accompanied by a *criterion* of holiness, both as to kind and degree, admitted by all men. *Prevailing* notions are often utterly erroneous, and if none might expose what they believe in their hearts to be wrong and injurious views, till it was proved, even to their adversaries' satisfaction, that they were far advanced in true sanctity, wrong views would be the prevailing ones till the end of time. Providence works by finer means than enter into this sort of philosophy, making imperfection minister to the perfecting of what is good and purifying of what is evil.

Whether or no the views of St. Jerome and other ancient Fathers concerning Inspiration are, as has been affirmed, something far deeper and higher than we, in our inferiour state of spirituality, can conceive, I do not presume to decide; but yet I would suggest, that high and spiritual views in general are capable of being set forth in words, and of gradually raising men up to *some* apprehension of them. They do not remain a light to lighten the possessor and mere darkness, or a light that closely resembles a shade, to the rest of the world. Things that pertain to reason and the spirit appeal to the rational and spiritual in mankind at large; they tend to elicit the reason and expand the understandings of men; deep calleth unto deep; and if the teaching of Paul and John is now in a wonderful manner apprehended by peasants and children, who hear the Gospel habitually, St. Jerome's notions of Inspiration, if truly divine and evangelical, would by this time be generally apprehended by Christians in the same way, and by the wise and learned would be comprehended more intellectually and systematically. Whereas, can it be denied, that no consistent scheme of Inspiration has ever been gathered from the teaching of those ancient Fathers? They who believe that such a scheme is contained in their writings, explicitly or implicitly, will do well to unfold it. Merely to talk about such a thing in a style of indefinite grandeur is but to conjure up a mist, by the spell of solemn sounding words, to mock the eyes of men with a cloud castle for a season—a very little season it is during which any such piece of mist-magnificence can remain undispersed in times like the present, except for those who had rather gaze on painted vapours than on realities of a hue to which their eyes are unaccustomed.

I have not been able to obtain any exact account of all my Father's courses of lectures, given after his visit to Germany, but find, from letters and other sources of information, that he lectured in London, before going to Malta, in 1804; on his return from Malta, in 1807; again in 1808; in 1811; in 1814, in which year he also lectured at Bristol; in 1817; and, for the last time, I believe, in 1819. His

early lectures at Bristol are mentioned in the biographical sketch.

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The poetic or imitative art, an ancient critic has observed, must needs describe persons either better than they are, at the present time, or worse, or as they are exactly. The fact is, however, that in literary fiction *individuals* can seldom be exhibited *exactly* such as they are, the subtle interminglings of good and evil, the finely balanced qualities that exist in the actual characters of men, even those in whom the colours are deepest and the lines most strongly traced, being *too* fine and subtle for dramatic effect. Indeed it is scarcely possible to present a man as he truly is except in plain narrative; his mind cannot be properly manifested save in and through the very events and circumstances which gave utterance to his individual being and which his peculiar character helped to mould and produce. When taken out of these and placed in the alien framework of the novelist or dramatist it becomes another thing; the representation may convey truth of human nature in a broad way, and seem *drawn to the life*, if the writer have a lively wit, but as a portrait of a particular person it is often the more a falsehood the more natural it appears.

To poetic descriptions these remarks do not apply. They are, for the most part, mere views of a character in its elevated and poetic aspects—tributes of admiration to its beautiful qualities. Such are the fine stanzas, already quoted, in which the *poet* Coleridge is described by the great Poet, his Friend: and such are some less known, composed by a poet of a later generation, who never saw my Father face to face. Of these the last four will serve for a conclusion to this sketch. I give them here for the sake of their poetic truth and the earnest sympathy they manifest with the studious poet—

> Philosopher contemning wealth and death,
> Yet docile, childlike full of life and love,—

though they are not among the very finest parts of their author's thoughtful and beautiful poetry.

No loftier, purer soul than his hath ever
With awe revolved the planetary page
(From infancy to age)
Of knowledge: *sedulous and proud to give her*
*The whole of his great heart for her own sake;*
*For what she is; not what she does, or what can make.*[14]

And mighty voices from afar came to him;
Converse of trumpets held by cloudy forms,
And speech of choral storms.
Spirits of night and noontide bent to woo him—
He stood the while, lonely and desolate
As Adam when he ruled a world, yet found no mate.

His loftiest Thoughts were but like palms uplifted;
Aspiring, yet in supplicating guise—
His sweetest songs were sighs.
Adown Lethean streams his spirit drifted,
Under Elysian shades from poppied bank
With Amaranths massed in dark luxuriance dank.

Coleridge, farewell! That great and grave *transition*
Which may not Priest or King or Conqueror spare,
And yet a Babe can bear,
Has come to thee. Through life a goodly vision
Was thine; and time it was thy rest to take.
Soft be the sound ordained thy sleep to break—
When thou art waking, wake me, for thy Master's sake![15]

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[14] Here seems an allusion to an anti-utilitarian maxim of Bacon's, which is very expressive of my Father's turn of mind:—Et tamen quemadmodum luci magnam habemus gratiam, quod per eam vias inire, artes exercere, legere, nos invicem dignoscere possimus, et nihilominus *ipsa visio lucis res præstantior est et pulchrior, quam multiplex ejus usus; ita certe ipsa contemplatio rerum, prout sunt, sine superstitione aut impostura, errore aut confusione, in se ipsa magis digna est, quam universus inventorum fructus.* Novum Organum, Part of Aph. CXXIX.

[15] From a volume containing *The Search after Proserpine. Recollections of Greece* and other Poems by Aubrey de Vere, author of *The Fall of Rora.*

# APPENDIX.

## ON THE POETICAL PICTURESQUE.

MR. HALLAM and Mr. Leigh Hunt have both expressed dissent from my Father's remark in the *Remains*, I. pp. 93-4, that Spenser's descriptions "are not in the true sense of the word picturesque; but are composed of a wondrous series of images, as in our dreams." Whether or not "the true sense of the word picturesque" is what my Father meant, I do not pretend to determine, but I think that what he meant is true of Spenser, and indicates a characteristic difference between his painting and that of Dante, Pindar, and more or less of many other poets. Lessing gives the widest definition of the poetical picturesque; he says that a poet writes picturesquely, not when his words furnish matter for a material painting; many writers do this whose writing is not picturesque:—but when they have the same *effect* as a material painting in bringing a sensuous object vividly before the mind. *Paradise Lost*, as Martin's illustrations have proved, is not very picturable. Who can paint such universalities as he deals with in his world-poem? Who could shew on canvass how

> Vernal airs
> Breathing the smell of field and grove attune
> The trembling leaves, while Universal Pan,
> Knit with the Graces and the Hours in dance,
> Led on th' eternal Spring,—— ?

or how

> as earth, so he the world
> Built on circumfluous waters calm, in wide
> Crystalline Ocean, and the loud misrule
> Of Chaos far removed—?

Yet no one will deny the *truth* of Milton's language, and that every sight, sound, and other sensation which he speaks of is faithfully imaged by his words?[1] My Father, on the other hand, seems to have been speaking of the *picturesque* in the most restricted sense. He calls a poetic description *properly* such, when it presents a composite object of sight, containing neither more nor less than we might see at once *with our eyes*, the poet making this picture the emblem of a sentiment, instead of explaining the sentiment directly; or when he tells a story by means of it. This sort of picture-drawing belongs to rapid, vehement writers; it speeds on the representation; it has an oriental heat and intensity about it. There is a vivid one in Solomon's Song, if I may venture to speak of that part of the Canon in reference to poetry. It is in chap. v. verses 2-4. I do not say that this could be put on canvass; the capability of being actually painted is not the criterion of the poetical picturesque;—many of Pindar's finest pictures could not be materially painted: it is enough that our eye in thought can embrace the whole at once; the Beloved with his hand upon the lock, and his hair wet with the dews of night: the Spouse within upon her couch, her doffed raiment lying beside it. Instances of the same kind in Pindar are Jove's Eagle asleep on the sceptre, ruffling up his feathers in transport, while the dancers are moving to the sound of the Lyre; Mars lying in tranced slumber, and the other gods listening all around: Neptune appearing to Pelops by the sea-side in the darkness: Pallas appearing to Bellerophon at night, all gleaming in armour, darkly blue,—he leaping to his feet and seizing the golden bridle which she had laid beside him: Iamus calling to his Sire and Grandsire by night from the midst of the Alpheus. These three last would not make good material pictures, because of *the darkness;* even Rembrandt would not have managed them well had he tried to

[1] "Adam bending over the sleeping Eve in the *Paradise Lost* (Bk. V. ver. 18,) and Dalilah approaching Samson, in the *Agonistes* (I. 710) are the only two proper pictures I remember in Milton."—Table Talk, p. 182.

present the poet's vision faithfully; but how vivid they are to the mind's eye! Instances in Dante are numerous, but I will select two. *Caron dimonio, con occhi di bragia*, Charon, "demoniac form," with wheels of flame around his eyes, collecting the shades into his boat upon the livid lake, and striking with his oar whoever lingers: another unpicturable picture. This is in the third Canto: in the ninth we have the three Furies rising up at the fiery top of a tower in the city of Dis, blood-stained, girt about the waist with hydras of the deepest green, having small serpents for loose ringlets, and the large horned cerastes wound about their temples by way of braid: Megæra on the left, Alecto weeping on the right, Tisiphone in the midst. *This* is picturable: Flaxman has designed it finely: his Megæra expresses deadly hate; Alecto the torture of intolerable grief: (Dante describes her as *weeping*:) Tisiphone, the central figure, appears the image of Frenzy, to which all violent passion tends, and in which it is merged when it transcends certain limits. Euripides has many pictures: there is the Trojan dame, gazing into the golden mirror, that flashes back the light with interminable reflection, while she binds up her locks under the head-band or mitre, ready to sink upon the vest-spread couch, where her husband lies asleep, his spear suspended against the wall of the chamber. This is in the *Hecuba*,[2] and there is a companion to it in the *Medea*;[3] Glauce drest in her gorgeous attire, rising from her chair and tripping delicately on her white feet, after smiling at herself in the glass as she placed upon her curled hair the golden crown; and there is a grand contrast to it in the *Phœnissæ*;[4]—Capaneus struck by lightning, as he is stepping over the battlement of the tower he has scaled; his body is rent asunder as by a sling; his hair flies upward, his blood gushes downward his hands and feet are whirled round like Ixion's wheel, his bloated corse falls to the ground.

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[2] *Hecuba*. 919. See the translation of the beautiful chorus in which this picture occurs, by Judge Coleridge, in the *Table Talk*, p. 244-6, 2nd edit.

[3] *Medea*. 1160. [4] *Phœnissæ*. 1187.

Horace does not abound in pictures, but there is one at the beginning of his Ode to Bacchus, and another very striking at the end of it.

> Te vidit insons Cerberus aureo
> Cornu decorum, leniter atterens
> Caudam; et recedentis trilingui
> Ore pedes tetigitque crura.[5]

Virgil's description of Venus appearing to her son in the first Æneid is a true picture.[6] There is a beautiful one of Kailyal in *Kehama:*

> There he beholds upon the sand
> A lovely maiden in the moonlight stand.
> The land-breeze lifts her locks of jet,
> The waves around her polish'd ancles play,
> Her bosom with the salt sea-spray is wet;
> Her arms are crost, unconsciously, to fold
> That bosom from the cold,
> While statue-like she seems her watch to keep,
> Gazing intently on the restless deep.[7]

This might be a pendant to the Ariadne of Catullus:

> Immemor at juvenis fugiens pellit vada remis,
> Irrita ventosæ linquens promissa procellæ.
> Quem procul ex alga mœstis Minoïs ocellis
> Saxea ut effigies bacchantis prospicit Evœ,[8] &c.

There is some fine passionate painting in the second Choral Ode of the *Agamemnon.* The feeling of the passage, to which I allude, is perhaps conveyed in this free translation, which however departs far enough, I own, from the grand statue-like simplicity and severity of the original.

Πάρεστι σῖγ' ἐς ἀτίμους ἀλοίδορος. κ.τ.λ. *v.* 380-92.[9]

> He comes and he casts not a curse on their head!
> Be their's the dishonour!—reproaches are vain!—

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[5] Lib. II. Carm. xix. [6] Æn. ver. 314.

[7] Canto xvii. *Baly.*

[8] *Nuptiæ Pelei et Thetidos.* v. 58.

[9] I should prefer the old reading with Hermann's emendation

But through his fond yearning for one that is fled,
A spectre appears in the Palace to reign.[10]
For he wastes, and his figure, so comely of yore,
Is the form of the well-shapen statue no more.
From his hollow eye the splendour is gone,[11]
All beauty and shining:

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of σιγᾶσι, if scholars allowed it,—

Πάρεστι σιγὰς, ἄτιμος, ἀλοίδορος,
Ἄδιστος ἀφεμένων ἰδεῖν—

and would render it thus,

He comes in silence, unavenged, unreviling,
Mildest of forsaken (men) to behold—

as we might say, no other man was ever seen to take such a thing so sweetly and quietly. Passow gives the word σιγάς, and also suggests σιγᾶς Doric for σιγῆς, σιγήεις: but ᾶσ would not correspond to the metre of the antistrophe. I cannot see why ἄτιμος is inapplicable to Menelaus, as Klausen intimates: to Helen it certainly is. Scholefield reads

Πάρεστι σῖγ' ἄτιμος, ἀλλ' ἀλοίδορος,
Ἄπιστος ἀφεμέναν ἰδεῖν—

my objection to which is that the first verse runs like prose: ἀλλ' ἀλοίδορος, would hardly do in the heart of a choral ode;—for the second line, that ἀφεμέναν does not properly mean *gone away* but *let go*, and that it does not carry on the sense of the preceding line so directly and closely as that which I suggest.

[11] "And in the yearning sick for her
Who now beyond the sea doth roam,
A phantasm vain shall seem to sit as queen within
his home."—Mr. Sewell's Translation.

Ἄνασσα is Greek for a Queen, the feminine termination precluding all ambiguity; but would ἀνάσσειν be used by a Greek writer to signify the mere presiding of a queen consort? An English poet would not have used the term *reign* in such a case.

[12] Consider the force of ἔῤῥει: is gone, perishes: ἔῤῥει τὰ καλά "her beauty is decayed," or "the luck is gone." How can

As the full bright stream when a drought comes on
Sinks low declining.
In the visions of night
He beholds the departed:—
But she glides from his embrace
By a path he cannot trace,
And leaves him heavy-hearted;
Sadden'd by brief delight!—
Frail pleasures that vanish when daylight appears,
As the light plumes of hoar-frost dissolve into tears.[1]

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beauty *go away* from the eyes of busts and statues where it never was?—not to speak of the anachronism of the notion, pointed out by Klausen. His interpretation is far better: "in the want, or loss, which his eyes sustain, all joy of love is lost to him." But I believe that Ἀφροδίτη, by itself, oftener means beauty than the joys of love. Whether that be so or not, I believe that Æschylus meant simply to say, In the hollows of his eyes all beauty perishes: *his eye is consumed*, like the Psalmist's, *for very trouble*.

"Man delights not me," says Hamlet, "nor woman neither." A *statue* consoles not me, says Menelaus, for the loss of a handsome wife! Shade of Æschylus is this, or is it not, a platitude? To say that the ancient chief took no pleasure in bright smiles of deep-zoned maids, or in flowing bowls of rich wine, would be *worth* saying; but to affirm that he cared little for stony images with eyes that see not, and limbs that move not, and bloodless cheeks, is not much in the spirit of those times, or perhaps of any times. Well! Pygmalion fell in love with a statue, but it was one of his own making; and most of us are apt to conceive a violent affection for our own works, whether they be statuary, poetry or criticism. Perhaps I must "own the soft impeachment" with regard to myself.

[1] I know what a host of authorities are against me, yet cannot help understanding verses 382-3-4-5-6, more simply than as the commentators, who are all divided one against another in regard to the exact sense of the passage, understand it. To me it seems a mere expansion of the Psalmist's complaint, *My beauty is gone*, or *mine eye is consumed, for very trouble*. Compare with Is. lii. 14, and Psalms xxii. 14-17—xxxi. 10, cii. 3-5, and Lam. iii. 4. The key of it is that expression Φάσμα. Surely

That noble ode of Klopstock's, so admired by Mr. Carlyle, *Die beiden Musen*, is finely painted: and the Alcaic metre, in which it is written, forces the author into a succintness, and consequent distinctness, wanting, I believe, in his hexameter style. Here are the 4th, 5th, and 12th stanzas attempted in the metre of the original:

She views the young, the trembling competitress,
In spirit firm; but eager and tremulous;
Her cheek with glowing roses spread, while
Loose to the winds her bright locks are streaming.

The straitened breath her bosom that palpitates,
In tumult, scarce can hold, and she bends herself
On tow'rd the goal,—the Herald lifts
His trump and in transport her eyes are floating.

* * * * * * *

Ah! how I tremble!—O ye undying ones,
Perchance my foot may reach the high goal the first!
Then may thy breath, O may it reach
My light-flowing locks as they stream behind me!

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either ἔχθεται is corrupt, or it must admit the sense "is alienated from the man;" it seems so plain that it is the state and appearance of Menelaus himself under the influence of sorrow that is described. How animated is the antithesis of *spectre*—its tenuity and impotence—with *reigning!*—of the statue—its changeless bulk and symmetry,—with the wasting mourner!—and how naturally follows upon this the description of the sunken eye! For a beautiful eye, in health and gladness, looks not only bright but full; it is like a lucid pool that rises to the edge of its banks, or a shining stream that fills its channel. In sickness and sorrow it seems to have shrunk, like the same pool when it has been drained or dried up, and shines feebly from the bottom of a darksome cavity. *Mine eyes fail*, says the Psalmist, waiting vainly for comfort from above. Such an interpretation is more simple, sensuous and impassioned, than the forced thought that the wraith of Helen shall seem to reign in the Palace, which Helen herself never did; and the ineffably flat one, that Menelaus hates fine statues because she is absent, and gazes with

Now Mr. L. Hunt, in his *Fancy and Imagination*, presents us with a beautiful set of "pictures" selected from the

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disgust on their vacant eye-sockets. Cannot some scholar suggest another reading for ἔχθεται, or find out that it may mean what I suggest?

A great scholar and commentator is quite against me, I find, in this matter: Klausen calls it ridiculous, though without showing why, to apply φάσμα to Menelaus. What thin partitions must divide the *ridiculous* and the reasonable, if critics can differ as they do on this passage!—for v. 383 has been very often applied to Menelaus. Klausen applies the whole description to Helen: verses 380-81, he reads thus: "*She* comes in silence to those that have not obtained vengeance, (*i.e.* the Atridæ) unreproached, most agreeable of dismissed wives to behold." In justification of *She comes*, he refers to v. 388 πάρεισιν δόξαι κ.τ.λ. This seems to me, I own, very forced. To say that *appearances*, visions of Helen come to Menelaus in sleep, the most natural thing in the world, is very different from saying, without preparation or explanation,—for the notion of a phantom (φάσμα) is not expressed till afterwards in v. 383—"*She* comes," meaning that the εἴδωλον of Helen, after she has eloped bodily with Paris, makes its appearance. Secondly, even if ἀλοίδορος can mean the same as ἀλοιδόρητος, of which Klausen gives no other instance, and if ἄδιστος can be feminine, which seems less unlikely, what sense is there in saying that Helen, thus vividly imaged and unreproached, comes to the Atridæ, to *both* the brother chiefs, one of whom, Agamemnon, neither loved her person nor tolerated her conduct? It would not be inconsonant with what we read of *Menelaus*, on the other hand, if we suppose him to be styled "gentlest of deserted husbands." All this is very bold—perhaps the boldness of ignorance—but I merely venture to say what seems to me to give the best sense, and the truest poetry to the passage, aware how mistaken I may be even on these points. Bishop Blomfield, I am told, is of opinion, that some particular tradition concerning an εἴδωλον of Helen is referred to. This would justify the application of φάσμα to Helen of course: yet to bring her in, first as a day spectre and then as a night one, seems to me poetically clumsy. Paley's *Agamemnon* I have not yet seen.

writings of Spenser; especially *The Faery Queen*, and assigns each to the master among material painters, to whose style it has most analogy. That these may not be called *pictures* it would be pedantic, perhaps inaccurate, to deny; but if we enter this Spenserian picture-gallery, we shall find that, at all events, every piece it contains belongs to a different *kind* of painting from that of which I have given instances. There is eye-painting in them; but they are made up, in part, of non-sensuous attributes, and they contain images which cannot be assembled together in space and time. Hence their slow, dreamy, faery-like, unreal character. They have, as my Father says, "an exceeding vividness:" so have dreams; but dreams disregard time and space, and bring objects together from all quarters: and in dreams too we have a feeling of endless multiplicity with an infinite expansion of time; and just the same feeling is excited by the descriptions of the *Faery Queen*. Let us examine them. The first picture in the Spenser Gallery is that of Clarissa or Charity, contained in two stanzas. Now in this description part is mere generalizing. "She was a woman in her freshest age," "of wondrous beauty," "goodly grace and comely personage;"—how much here is left indefinite, for the imagination to fill up! Part of it refers to qualities of the mind: she was "of bounty rare"—"full of great love"—"chaste in work and will"—"Cupid's wanton snare as hell she hated." We cannot *paint* all this even mentally. "A multitude of babes about her hung," who "joyed to behold her," whom she "feeds while they are weak and young," and "thrusts forth when they are waxed old:"—a very wise and kind proceeding, but matter of *time;* not to be *depictured* so much as to be *thought* of and moralized upon. Doubtless the two stanzas give us a picture of Charissa sitting in her ivory chair, open-necked, arrayed in yellow, a tire of gold upon her head, and a pair of doves by her side, children sporting about her, and one sucking in her arms; but how slowly and interruptedly is it wrought out!—how differently does Spenser paint from Dante and Pindar, who flash out a picture, and then pro-

ceed, leaving it to tell its own tale. The Catullian picture of Ariadne is interrupted by *one* touch of *mental* description:

Prospicit, et *magnis curarum fluctuat undis*,—

but this refers so directly to the visual object of the sea, the waves of which are washing her outer garment, head-gear, and girdle fallen at her feet, that it seems scarcely an interruption—seems one with those sensuous objects. The remarks which I have made on Spenser's Charissa may be applied to every other picture in Mr. Hunt's collection; they are all medleys. I may mention another character of visionary multiplicity and complexity in Spenser's pictures: he breaks into them with similes, and thus splits the image and sends the mind wandering in various directions. The passage quoted by my Father in illustration of his view, the comparison of Prince Arthur's crest with the Almond tree is not "particular" I think, but quite characteristic of Spenser's manner.

Her angel's face,
As the great eye of heaven shined bright
And made a sunshine in the shady place.—

Here we scarcely see the eye for the sunshine; we glance from earth to heaven, from the shady covert to the flaming sky—and the sun itself is likened to the eye of man, and we think of a sunbeam penetrating a leafy grove. We are surrounded with images of shade and sunshine, but rather feel the beauty of Una's eye than see it. The descriptions of Britomart's hair are just of the same character: in one of them it is said to be wound about her body

Like as the shining skie in summer's night,
What time the dayes with scorching heat abound,
Is creasted all with lines of fierie light,
That it prodigious seemes in common people's sight.

The simile of the statue in the pictures of Ariadne and of Kailyal has a different effect; it does not call away the mind

[13] See Book III. Canto IX. St. XX., and Book IV. Canto I. St. XIII.

from the object it is brought to express, but appears for a moment, like snow upon a river,—then melts into the current of thought and is lost sight of.

To deny Spenser's pictorial *power* would be ridiculous; but we may at least affirm that he used it in a way of his own; and that if Pindar's and Dante's are *proper* pictures, his are very beautiful *improper* ones. His description even of a single object is sometimes a cluster of pictures, with morals and sentiments interfused. The representations in the *Faery Queen*, in *Paradise Lost*, in Dante's *Inferno*, have each a specific character, appropriate to the poem in which they are found respectively. The first are dream-like, fit for Fairy Land; the second are cosmological: they are grand symbols of the universe; while Dante's Spirit-world, especially the first division of it, is described with matter of fact particularity. "Very closely connected with this picturesqueness," says my Father, after giving instances of the picturesque from the *Inferno*, "is the topographic reality of Dante's journey through Hell."[14] So particular is the description that I have always thought I could find my way through it without Virgil to guide me, and that with Virgil to guide me, discoursing as he went, if it were not for fear of the demons and sorrow for the condemned, I should prefer the tour to that of the toilsome *Purgatorio* or the blinding *Paradiso*.

There is one lovely picture of Pindar's, I do not say whether *proper* or *improper*, which I have omitted to mention; but it came to my mind, in referring to the passage of Wieland's *Oberon*, "where Retzia is delivered of her child," together with Spenser's birth of Belphœbe and Amoret:[15] I mean that of the baby Iamus lying hid among rushes in the "brambly maze." This is distinct from that of Evadne coming to the spring with her silver ewer and throwing off her crimson girdle; and also from that of Iamus, in the bloom of youth, invoking Apollo and Neptune in the stream of the Alpheus: these two last might form shutters or side pic-

[14] *Remains* I. p. 163. [15] *Faery Queen*, Bk. III. C. VI.

tures, while the first-mentioned might occupy the centre. Here is a part of the tale told with naked simplicity: I give this poor blank verse, unlyrical as it is, rather than Mr. Cary's elegant version, because it is my object to bring out the Pindaric picture plainly, and "the paste of honeyed words," which the rhymed translations spread over it, somewhat obscures it. My translation, though not word for word everywhere, never alters the thought or image.[16]

But she, her zone of crimson woof down laying
In darksome thicket, and her silver ewer,
Bore the divine soul'd boy, when bright-haired Phœbus
Had sent the Fates and Ilithyia mild
To aid her. Then came Iamus to light
Immediately,—a dear, heav'n speeded birth.
There on the ground, sad, sad at heart, she left him.
But by the will o' th' gods, two serpents came
With glittering eyes, and they took care of him
And fed him with the excellent juice of bees.

---

[16] I object in Mr. C.'s version to "Iamus *sprang forth* to light:" this is too Minerva-like; it takes from the naturalness, the feeling of baby helplessness and forlornness which gives the interest to the picture. "One short *sweet* pang released the child." I cannot persuade myself that Pindar so far departed from nature and differed from Scripture as to speak thus. One commentator suggests that *loved or lovely* may belong to Iamus; which I had also thought, but rejected, because it would make four *osses* come together, which Pindar would scarce have allowed. "Two *dragons* came with eyes of *azure flame*." This story is a legend, no fairy tale: it is made up of the common materials of mother earth, as to the outward and phenomenal part. Mr. Ruskin says that olive-green is a colour of sky "in which Nature is not apt to indulge:" neither, I think, does she indulge in *azure flames* for the eyes of serpents. Iliad xx. ver. 172, shews the true sense of γλαυκώπις. The cognate verb means to *glare* or *gleam* as do the eyes of a wild beast about to spring upon its victim. The γλαύξ, like other owls, has prominent glaring eyes. The sea was called glaucous from its gleaming, and then the epithet passed over to the *colour* of the sea. (Passow.) That vision of a *blue-eyed* Pallas must vanish,

Meanwhile the king from Pytho's rocky hold
Came swiftly driving, and of all in th' house
Inquired for his Evadne's new born Son;
Proclaiming him the Delphian's noble offspring,
One who should live to be the first of prophets,
And leave a race that should not fail on earth.
But none had seen or heard the sound of him
Now five days old; for he was lying hidden
'Mid rushes in the boundless briery wild,
His tender infant body all besprinkled
With red and yellow rays from profuse blossoms
Of the flower *Ion*,—whence his mother gave him
To wear for aye that fair and fadeless name.

---

after haunting the Homer-reader for so many centuries. *Verschwinde doch, wir haben ja aufgeklärt!* "Bee's unharmful *venom.*" The Greek ἰός signifies radically *emission*: it may mean *an arrow, rust, poison* or *honey:* no epithet can change the nature of *venom.* "His delicate body *wet* with yellow and empurpled rays from many a violet." The word translated is metaphorical: our *sprinkled* is often so used; Moore quotes in illustration:

Ætherius sol
*Irriguat* assidue cœlum candore recenti. (Lucret. lib. v.)

Lastly, ἴον is the same *word* as *viola:* but *our* violets have no red and yellow rays, and they grow in dry places. The rushes and the ewer shew that Iamus was born in a watery situation. Pindar meant a kind of narcissus or daffodil, a flower which, as Mr. Wordsworth's poem and the old fable of Narcissus shew, often grows near water. The ancients had also *dark* violets. Mr. Cary has the authority of Beaumont and Fletcher for his "golden tressed Apollo:" still I cannot think the epithet accurate: for a tress is a plait or braid. Neither Apollo nor any male deity of the Greeks ever appeared in braids. Homer uses the phrase χρυσοπλόκαμος in the hymn to Apollo, but applies it to that divinity's mother, not to himself. If it can be shewn that any old Greek author applies it to man, hero or god, I must yield the point: but it seems to me that the ancients were always exact and true in their epithets; their poetry was, in this respect, like popular speech and proverbs. This we always find when we *come to understand their language*, and to

The readers of my Father's poetry will call to mind some sweet child pictures of his, such as Pindar, in his day, would never have imagined.

> The fairy thing with red round cheeks,
> That always finds and never seeks.[17]—

and that in the Preface to the *Wanderings of Cain*,

> Encinctured with a twine of leaves,
> That leafy twine his only dress,
> A lovely Boy was plucking fruits
> By moonlight in a wilderness, &c.[18]

and in *The Pang more sharp than all*, one quite infantine

> Of babe, that tempts and shuns the menaced kiss,
> From its twy-cluster'd hiding place of snow!

My Father did not agree with Lessing, that

> Ein Küsschen das ein Kind mir schenket,
> Das ist ein Küss, den man nicht fühlt.[19]

---

what natural objects their words were really applied. We derns lose a good deal by being so misty and indistinct; look. into a raree-show for our descriptions rather than into the reai of nature. We cover our auriculas with many-coloured powd. instead of *candying* them. I do not dissent from the prai given to Mr. Cary's version in the Article on Pindar in t.. Quarterly; it has great merit on the whole: yet I think that Moore understood his author better. In *his* version Pind 's face looks bloated; he seems to have been drinking; chaplet of flowers on his head has got a little awry, and speech is diffuse and pompous: but Pindar sometimes sl away from us in Mr. Cary's version, and we have instead a x of Keatsified Milton. This note will be excused as it aims illustrate my Father's remarks on the diction of Pindar in Ch. ter V. of this volume.

[17] P. W. II. p. 53. [18] Ib. II. p. 100.

[19] The kiss of a little gamesome elf,
That kisses but to amuse himself,
First snatches his rosy mouth away,
Then squeezes it hard to mine in play,
As if he'd crush the cherry seal,
In a kiss the *heart* can scarcely feel.

I have heard him speak with admiration of the Rubens-like ower of painting motion displayed by Sir Walter Scott in me of the latter chapters of *Rob Roy*, especially, I be- ve, in chapter xvi. of the second volume, which in this t of graphic power may be compared with Dante's *In- o*. If we compare pages 260-3 of the romance, which ibe the escape of *Rob Roy* in passing the Forth, with C nto xxii. of the poem—(from line 118 to the end)—which escribes the escape of the barterer Ciampolo from the clutches of Alichin and the other demons, and his plunge into the boiling pitch, we shall find a similarity of effect produced with totally different materials. I think it must ave have been to this passage of *Rob Roy* that my Father's admiration especially referred.

Vol. II. p. 286.

*Tempora mutantur nos et mutamur in illis.*

After vainly searching for this verse in classic authors, I began to think, that it must belong to some mediæval poet, and abandoned the chase, saying to myself,

Mitte sectari rosa quo locorum
Sera moretur.

Since writing this I have learned from Mr. Donaldson that the line certainly belongs to no classic author: that it might be known from its latinity, and that it is probably a colloquial saying formed into an hexameter verse.

*Ib.* p. 417.

I omitted to mention in its place that "mighty sailor" is a mistake for "nightly sailor" in the *Catullian Hendecasyllables*. (Poet. Works, II. p. 69.)

THE END.

C. WHITTINGHAM, CHISWICK.

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